DEFENDING DEMOCRACY

Lessons for Building Resilience and Taking Action

A Curriculum Inspired by Timothy Snyder's On Tyranny

woven teaching

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WHO WE ARE

WOVEN FOUNDATION

We envision a world where human rights are upheld and protected for everyone, everywhere. Woven Foundation's mission is two-fold: We shift resources and decision-making power to community-led organizations and we also expand the use of education as a tool for upholding and protecting human rights.

We provide flexible and sustainable grant funding and capacity building support to community-led organizations. Our approach respects the experience and expertise of our partners and the wisdom of the communities they serve.

We raise awareness about the value of Human Rights Education, provide free and globally accessible teaching resources for schools and communities, and invest in partners advancing this field.

WOVEN TEACHING

Woven Teaching is the human rights education practice of Woven Foundation. Through a combination of original programming and grantmaking, Woven Teaching advances the foundation's focus on long-term change towards a widespread acceptance of basic human rights for all.

Our programmatic work is dedicated to supporting classroom teachers with practical help for ethical and effective instruction. We believe that by weaving Human Rights Education into the curriculum, educators can create socially responsible global citizens.

Woven Teaching envisions a world in which every student's education includes:

- A sense of historical perspective
- The development of critical thinking skills
- A feeling of global citizenship
- The ability to identify bigotry–understanding its negative effects on both individuals and society–and the analytical tools to combat it

CONTACT

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Do you have feedback on this lesson or want to share how you implemented it in your classroom? We'd love to hear from you!

Please take our short evaluation at **surveymonkey.com/r/wt-eval** or scan the QR code to the left.

FOREWORD

"To be truly radical is to make hope possible rather than despair convincing."

– Raymond Williams

Why *On Tyranny*? Why Now?

At Woven Teaching, we provide individual lesson plans, but also more comprehensive curricula built around frameworks that help us understand how best to be promoters and defenders of human rights. Our first curriculum, ***Human Rights Are for Everyone***, is based on the United Nations' Universal Declaration of Human Rights. Our second, ***Stages of Genocide***, is based on Dr. Gregory Stanton's Ten Stages of Genocide. The project before you, *Defending Democracy: Lessons for Building Resilience and Taking Action*, is our third curriculum, based on the book *On Tyranny: Twenty Lessons from the Twentieth Century* by Professor Timothy Snyder.

When I came across Timothy Snyder's thin volume, *On Tyranny*, in 2017, I was gratified to see a major historian on authoritarianism and the Holocaust recognizing the moment and sounding a warning. As far back as 2015, I remember colleagues in Holocaust and Genocide Prevention Education, as well as historians of authoritarianism, beginning to check in with each other, asking, "is this really happening?", and making efforts in op-eds and social media discourse to make people aware of the very real threat to their democratic way of life. I remember in that same period listening to NPR's coverage of the 2016 US presidential election on the morning drive to my daughter's school, telling my then six-year-old, "this isn't normal." There had always been bad actors, but this was different. My child is now a high school sophomore and I have yet to be able to tell her things have returned to "normal."

Through *On Tyranny*, Snyder has created an accessible and straight-forward guidebook for all members of society to take action to protect our democracy. That is why, at this moment, Woven Teaching has chosen to create a curriculum based on this framework–to help young people recognize the signs of authoritarianism and provide tools for them to defend democracy in their communities and as global citizens.

Since 2016, the United States government has perpetrated family separations and other legalized cruelties against migrants. Both political and broader public spaces have seen increases in bullying and hate speech, where previously closeted white supremacists now go mask-off and boldly trumpet their views and march in public. We have seen holders of political office attempt to discredit elections, and we have seen a rise in political violence–including plots to kidnap public officials in California and Michigan, armed occupations of state legislatures, and, of course, the January 6 insurrection. Dozens of felony indictments of a former president and the blatant corruption of the Supreme Court give people little faith that their government is focused on the best interests of the people.

That said, the ideas contained in Snyder's *On Tyranny* and Woven Teaching's *Defending Democracy* curriculum are not partisan; they are supportive of democratic values and of protecting all people. We are in a moment when all who value human rights and democracy need to speak clearly and act accordingly. Democracy is messy, imperfect, and not a design for a utopia. There have always been, and will continue to be, struggles to protect and support the rights of all people. Circumstances change, cultures evolve, and democratic governments have to persistently adapt to catch up to new challenges. Not in spite of but because of that, democracy remains the best system of government available. In its finest iteration, it strives to include all members of society in deciding how the nation will function. If we want to live with secure and protected rights and freedoms, we need to firmly stand in support of democracy.

Defending Democracy is remarkable not only in its timeliness, but also in its impressive contributing authors. Like our other framework-based curricula, the lessons included are modular and adaptable to multiple learning and resource areas. As always, Woven Teaching's work is led and created by the knowledgeable, experienced, and talented team of Nikki Bambauer and Nina Simone Grotch. I am sincerely grateful for their diligence and integrity in making Human Rights Education more broadly accessible.

With appreciation and hope,

Jessica Bylo
Founder, Woven Teaching
President, Woven Foundation

HUMAN RIGHTS EDUCATION (HRE)

The **Universal Declaration of Human Rights** (UDHR) states that, "every individual and every organ of society […] shall strive by teaching and education to promote respect for these rights and freedoms." With this in mind, Woven Teaching believes that all educators have a responsibility to teach about human rights. Without knowledge of our rights, how can we hope to exercise and protect them?

Human Rights Education is built upon the following three ideas:

Learning about human rights – What are they?

Learning through human rights – How can we ensure that we are teaching about human rights in a way that reflects human rights values?

Learning for human rights – How will learners use this information to make positive change in the world?

This framework provides the foundation for all of Woven Teaching's work.

ABOUT

One of the many goals of Human Rights Education is to give learners a sense of global connectedness and interdependence. Too often, human rights are seen as issues taking place "over there" or to others. HRE aims to provide a context showing that we are all inextricably linked and that our challenges and solutions can be recognized by acknowledging these connections. By linking human rights issues between time periods and geographic locations, learners can get a better sense of their own place in the world and their connection(s) to movements, issues, and peoples both inside and outside of their community.

THROUGH

Human Rights Education is not only about the content we teach but is also about using the values of HRE to create a more equitable, student-centered classroom where learners work together to determine the path of their learning. Putting the values of Human Rights Education into practice in your classroom and curriculum is an important aspect of this work. This includes providing opportunities for cooperative work and student-centered and student-led learning. By mirroring the values of HRE in the ways we teach, we model and uphold these values in both principle and action.

FOR

Encouraging engagement and activism is an important goal of HRE. Students learn about the foundations of human rights and democracy in order to defend and protect them for themselves and others. Providing opportunities for learners to identify with issues and movements they care about and to identify actions they can take to make their voice heard is an important element of Human Rights Education.

Defending Democracy provides educators with the resources and information to teach about, through, and for human rights. Because the two are inextricably linked, each lesson builds student knowledge on protecting both democracy and human rights. The goal is for students to learn about democracy and human rights and to learn ways to advocate for themselves and for those whose rights have been violated. Using critical thinking, reading analysis, and the methods of HRE, the curriculum aims to give educators a unique way to bring this important topic to life.

GOALS OF THE CURRICULUM

Provide educators with:

- Resources to teach about democracy and authoritarianism in both historical and contemporary context
- 12 interactive lessons based on Timothy Snyder's *On Tyranny: Twenty Lessons from the Twentieth Century*
- A human rights-based framework to examine local, national, and global issues
- Additional resources for continued learning and engagement
- Practical suggestions for empowering students and participants to become global citizens and human rights defenders

Provide students with enough information and actionable ideas that by the end of the curriculum, they will be able to:

- Recognize democratic and authoritarian practices.
- Understand small, everyday actions that individuals can take to help protect and promote democracy.
- Develop strategies for collective action to strengthen democracy.
- Take action to become global citizens, protectors of democracy, and human rights defenders.

OVERVIEW

Over the past 20 years, democracy has declined around the world. On every continent, countries are facing challenges to democracy, and people around the world find themselves experiencing more restrictions, fewer freedoms, and an increasing number of violations of their human rights. Democracy provides an environment that upholds fundamental freedoms and respects human rights; all who value human rights must take action to prevent further democratic decline. **We know that educators are well-positioned to make a significant impact in this area.**

Based on the framework provided by Timothy Snyder in *On Tyranny: Twenty Lessons from the Twentieth Century*, *Defending Democracy* offers teachers a suite of 15 lessons to support students to be promoters and defenders of democracy and human rights. The curriculum includes 3 introductory lessons on democracy and authoritarianism, followed by lessons based on 12 actions that young people can take to fight the very real danger of authoritarianism. With an emphasis on critical thinking, media literacy, collaboration and community building, *Defending Democracy* helps students gain the skills needed for individual and collective action to strengthen democracy.

The lessons in *Defending Democracy* are highly accessible, practical, and action-oriented. They are adaptable and can be implemented in either high- or low-technology environments. They are designed to each fit into one class period, be implemented with little preparation, and are modular, allowing educators to use as many as desired. The order of the lessons and the timing of the activities are only suggestions; educators are encouraged to adapt these resources to best engage and inspire the students they are working with.

Events in any individual country do not take place in a vacuum. *Defending Democracy* offers historical and contemporary examples from diverse contexts, providing students the opportunity to learn from the experiences of people with different cultural backgrounds, religious beliefs, and social norms and to consider larger trends. Equipped with a global perspective and sense of personal responsibility, students will be prepared to take action to protect democracy in their communities and beyond.

The curriculum is divided into three parts:

PART 1: INTRODUCTION TO DEMOCRACY AND AUTHORITARIANISM

The first section of the curriculum introduces democracy and authoritarianism, including common practices and contemporary examples.

- **Lesson 1, "Introducing Democracy and Authoritarianism,"** introduces students to the concepts of democracy and authoritarianism. Students will consider the ways that authoritarians exploit mental and physical reactions to maintain control. They will also learn a technique for nervous system regulation that can be used to maintain calm in increasingly uncertain times.
- **Lesson 2, "Democratic and Authoritarian Practices,"** activates students' prior knowledge by asking them to categorize democratic and authoritarian practices. It also asks students to consider the state of democracy in their own country.
- **Lesson 3, "Contemporary Democracy and Authoritarianism,"** asks students to explore real-world examples of democratic and authoritarian practices from across the globe. Case studies include: Belarus, Ecuador, Nigeria, Samoa, Sri Lanka, and Turkey.

PART 2: TIMOTHY SNYDER'S *ON TYRANNY*

The second section of the curriculum includes 12 lessons, each based on one chapter from *On Tyranny*.

- **Lesson 4, "Do Not Obey in Advance,"** invites students to explore the concept of anticipatory obedience. In the context of both school and world history, students begin to consider the important role that critical thinking plays in making decisions to go with the flow or to stand against the current. Students will learn about a public protest by women in Nazi Germany.
- **Lesson 5, "Make Eye Contact and Small Talk,"** invites students to connect with their peers through the practice of making eye contact and small talk. It also gives students the opportunity to express their creativity and build community through abstract contour drawing.
- **Lesson 6, "Be Kind to Our Language,"** asks students to consider the content they view on social media and to reflect on the role of algorithms in limiting our perspectives. Students will respond to quotes from famous authors on the power of reading. The lesson also provides students with the opportunity to build a reading habit.
- **Lesson 7, "Believe in Truth,"** gives students the opportunity to explore why truth is essential and how we can protect our democratic values by standing against misinformation. It asks students to analyze case studies of historical events affected by the spread of misinformation,

including: The Spanish-American War, the Great Influenza, the Reichstag Fire, and the Tet Offensive.

- **Lesson 8, "Investigate,"** encourages students to be critical of the information they read online and in the news. It teaches students about media literacy, encouraging them to be aware and cautious of misinformation and moral panics. Students will examine a case study about a moral panic in India.
- **Lesson 9, "Take Responsibility for the Face of the World,"** emphasizes positive artistic expression as a tool for civic action. Students will learn about visual artists who use their work to respond to authoritarianism and engage in art-making activities that transform public or personal symbols into messages of democracy and hope.
- **Lesson 10, "Listen for Dangerous Words,"** provides students the opportunity to analyze the historical use of dangerous words and their significance. Through this exercise, students will learn how to spot manipulative language today and ensure that its use does not undermine democratic institutions. Students will examine speeches by world leaders including Mao Zedong, Joseph McCarthy, George W. Bush, Muammar Gaddafi, and Viktor Orbán.
- **Lesson 11, "Contribute to Good Causes,"** explores the connection between supporting civil society organizations and upholding democracy. Students will understand that freedom of association is antithetical to authoritarianism. Students will also examine campaigns of US-based nonprofit organizations.
- **Lesson 12, "Establish a Private Life,"** allows students to examine their relationship to privacy and consider how privacy supports democracy. Students will also learn steps that they can take to enhance their digital security. Students will examine case studies of digital privacy violations in Bangladesh and Turkey, as well as the Cambridge Analytica scandal.
- **Lesson 13, "Practice Corporeal Politics,"** introduces students to various acts of civil disobedience. The goal is to inspire students to be agents of positive change in their communities. Students will review historical and contemporary examples of activism from around the globe.
- **Lesson 14, "Learn From Peers in Other Countries,"** provides students the opportunity to learn from young people in other countries by studying youth-led organizations that advocate for human rights, democratic values, and more inclusive and just societies. Examples are drawn from organizations working in Bangladesh, Brazil, Kenya, and Palestine. Students are invited to reflect on their own power and agency to influence and change society for the better.
- **Lesson 15, "Be a Global Citizen and Be as Courageous as You Can,"** explores the meaning of patriotism and what it means to students. It helps students to understand the role of global citizens in fostering an equitable and sustainable world, and to reflect on the importance of courage in protecting democracy.

PART 3: APPENDIX

This final section offers additional resources that can be used to supplement learning.

- **Contributors:** More information about the contributors to *Defending Democracy*
- **Evaluation:** A brief evaluation for students to complete at the end of the curriculum
- **Glossary:** Definitions of key terms found in the curriculum that may be useful in establishing a common language
- **Creating a Community Agreement:** Tips for brainstorming and agreeing upon ground rules
- **Group Work Roles:** List of optional roles for small groups that provide each participant with a "job" for the activity
- **Resources for Further Learning:** Additional resources for learning about democracy and youth activism
- **Resources from Woven Teaching:** Additional resources from Woven Teaching and information on how to get involved with us
- **Universal Declaration of Human Rights – Student Version:** A simplified version of the UDHR

CONSIDERATIONS FOR TEACHING ETHICALLY AND EFFECTIVELY

Woven Teaching encourages educators to consider these suggestions for creating a harmonious and positive learning environment.

Teaching about complex historical and contemporary issues can be challenging. As the world becomes increasingly polarized, individuals often exist in echo chambers–repeating the narratives that they believe in while also shutting out voices and narratives that they don't agree with (or with voices that they want excluded from the conversation).

Defending Democracy provides opportunities to lead and engage in difficult conversations with your students. There are no shortcuts or simple answers to creating classrooms where all learners feel comfortable and encouraged to share their opinions, and, just as importantly, where they can learn to listen respectfully and consider other viewpoints.

We believe the following guidelines are a good starting point for engaging your students in difficult (and sometimes heated) conversations:

- Ask students to create a community agreement and enforce a set of ground rules for respectful classroom conversations. This is best done at the beginning of the year or semester so that students can reference them early and often.
- Encourage students to view disagreements and debates as opportunities to learn and grow in their thinking.
- Acknowledge how difficult it can be to share a different or unpopular opinion, especially among one's friends and peers.
- Remind students to use "I" statements and to speak from their own experience.
- Emphasize that students should avoid generalizations about other groups and identities.
- Remind students that personal attacks are never appropriate.
- Encourage students to complicate their thinking and avoid oversimplification by avoiding stereotypes.
- Ask students to be precise and specific with their language.
- Remind students of the difference between intent and impact. Acknowledge that our words and actions can have a different impact than we intended and it is important to recognize how they might have impacted someone else (regardless of what we meant).
- Allow time to process the material. Provide space for emotional responses as well as reflection.
- Support students to work critically with source material, particularly on the internet. Recommend authoritative sources with factual, archival content.
- Encourage students to make connections between historical and contemporary events while also recognizing their complexities and differences.
- Fight cynicism and apathy with hope and opportunities for action. Reinforce the idea that we all have a role to play in defending democratic ideals and fighting authoritarianism.

LESSONS

LESSON 1: INTRODUCING DEMOCRACY AND AUTHORITARIANISM

> "If young people do not begin to make history, politicians of eternity and inevitability will destroy it. And to make history, young [people] will have to know some. This is not the end, but a beginning."
>
> *On Tyranny,* Epilogue (p. 126)

OVERVIEW

Content Level	Ages 14-18 (Grades 9-12)
Time	50 Minutes

Description	This lesson is designed to fit into one class period. Teachers should make adjustments as needed to meet the needs of their students. The lesson includes:
	• Pre-Assessment
	• 3 Activities
	  • Individual writing activity for students to consider the benefits of democracy and the potential lures of authoritarianism
	  • All-class video review and discussion on authoritarian methods of control
	  • Nervous system regulation practice

Guiding Questions	• What is democracy? What are its benefits? • What is authoritarianism? • What are some strategies employed by authoritarians?
Learning Objectives	At the end of this lesson, students will be able to: • Define democracy and authoritarianism. • Understand how the brain operates under increasingly authoritarian practices. • Utilize grounding tools to reset their nervous systems in times of stress.

Materials	• **Google Slides deck** (optional)
	• Video: "**The Brain on Authoritarianism**" (8:26, The Horizons Project and Beyond Conflict)
	• Student Handouts (also available digitally via **Google Docs**)
	  • **Pre- and Post-Assessment**
	  • **Understanding Authoritarian Tactics graphic organizer**
	• Notebooks/journals

Common Core Standards *Learn more at **corestandards.org**.*	Speaking & Listening • CCSS.ELA-Literacy.SL.1 Writing • CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.4 Language • CCSS.ELA-Literacy.L.6
Social Justice Standards *These standards were created by Learning for Justice. Learn more at **bit.ly/LFJ-standards**.*	Diversity • DI.9-12.6 • DI.9-12.10 Justice • JU.9-12.13 • JU.9-12.15 Action • AC.9-12.17

INTRODUCTION

In his book *On Tyranny: Twenty Lessons from the Twentieth Century*, Historian and Yale University Professor Timothy Snyder offers practical actions that individuals can take to help stop the spread of authoritarianism. The lessons in the introductory section of *Defending Democracy* are intended to prepare students for the following twelve lessons that dive into the framework offered in *On Tyranny*. By establishing a base knowledge of democracy and authoritarianism, students will be better prepared to engage with Snyder's framework.

The activities in this lesson introduce students to the concepts of democracy and authoritarianism. Students will engage in a short writing activity about democracy. They will also consider the ways that authoritarians exploit mental and physical reactions to maintain control. Finally, the lesson introduces students to a technique for nervous system regulation–a tool that can be used to maintain calm in increasingly uncertain times.

FOCUS ON HUMAN RIGHTS

Woven Teaching believes that **human rights education** is essential for students to understand and assert their own rights and to protect the rights of others. As a result, the **Universal Declaration of Human Rights** (UDHR) lies at the core of Woven Teaching's materials. The document's 30 articles outline fundamental human rights: basic rights and freedoms which every human being is entitled to, regardless of race, religion, birthplace, gender, sexual orientation, or other characteristics. Although its articles are not legally binding, the UDHR serves as a moral compass for the international community.

The activities in this lesson connect directly to several UDHR articles, including:

- **Article 1**: Right to equality, dignity, and respect.
- **Article 29**: Right to be supported by your community and a duty to do the same.
- **Article 30**: Human rights belong to you; no one can take away your human rights.

ACTIVITIES

PRE-ASSESSMENT

Prior to the first session, students will complete a pre-learning assessment as an indication of their beliefs and understandings at the beginning of the *Defending Democracy* curriculum. Students will return to the assessment at the end of the curriculum.

Materials

- Student Handout: Pre- and Post-Assessment (**Handout A**)

Procedure

1. Distribute a Pre- and Post-Assessment (**Handout A**) to each student. Instruct students to spend a few minutes completing the left "pre-assessment" side of the handout. Let them know that their responses will not be shared with others; they are only to track learning and personal growth over the course of the curriculum.

2. Collect the assessment forms and review, noting students' level of familiarity with democracy and authoritarianism. Use the data provided about their willingness to engage in activism or social change work as you move through the curriculum, encouraging politically active students to share about their experiences with activism and advocacy in order to inspire others.

3. When you have reached the end of the curriculum, redistribute the assessment forms, this time asking students to complete the right "post-assessment" side of the form. Celebrate the expansion of knowledge and the increased enthusiasm willingness to take action!

1 UNDERSTANDING CONCEPTS *15 MINUTES*

Students will brainstorm the definitions of *democracy* and *authoritarianism*, then share their thoughts on the two systems in a quick journal response.

Materials

- **Google Slides deck** (optional)
- Notebooks/journals

Procedure

1. Explain that the goal of today's lesson is to introduce the concepts of democracy and authoritarianism. Begin by asking: *What is democracy? What is authoritarianism?* Elicit a few responses, encouraging students to share historic or contemporary examples of both systems. Then, share the following definitions:
    - **democracy:** a political system in which the power is vested in the people and exercised by them directly or indirectly through a system of representation, usually involving free and fair elections
    - **authoritarianism:** a system of power and method of governing which favors total submission to authority at the expense of personal freedom; a system in which there is a concentration of power in a leader or group who is not constitutionally responsible to the people

2. Ask students to spend a moment thinking about what they already know about democracy. *How does it work? What are some elements of democratic societies? What are the values of democratic societies?* Invite them to spend a minute sharing their knowledge with the students around them.

3. Ask a few students to share their ideas with the class, then instruct students to respond to at least two of the following prompts in their notebooks:
    a. What are some benefits of a democratic system?
    Possible responses: Ability to participate in the political process; freedom to share one's opinion publicly; a freer environment which facilitates the exercise of human rights; respect for the rule of law; higher likelihood of peace, etc.
    b. In places around the world, authoritarian regimes often have support from large parts of the population. Why might people support authoritarianism? Can you think of any contemporary or historical examples of authoritarian leaders who have received widespread support?
    Possible responses: Potential for higher efficiency and sweeping changes, potentially more unified country (although that unification can be forced), etc.
    c. In the West, there is a common belief that democracy is the best form of government. Do you agree or disagree, and why? If you disagree, what might a better option be?

    Allow 5-10 minutes for students to respond.

4. Bring the class together and revisit the prompts, asking one or two students to share their responses to each. Transition by asking: *Democracy has many benefits, one of which is that power is held collectively by the people. Is democracy worth defending?* Elicit responses from students.

5. Emphasize the connection between protecting democracy and protecting human rights. While no democracy is perfect, compared to authoritarian states, democracies are far more likely to protect human rights and fundamental freedoms.

Ask a volunteer to read the following passage aloud:

"Democracy as a form of government is a universal benchmark for human rights protection; it provides an environment for the protection and effective realization of human rights. Today, after a period of increased democratization around the world, many democracies appear to be backsliding. Some governments seem to be deliberately weakening independent checks on their powers, suffocating criticism, dismantling democratic oversight and ensuring their long-term rule, with negative impact on people's rights."[1]

– UN Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights

2 PSYCHOLOGICAL RESPONSES TO AUTHORITARIANISM *25 MINUTES*

Students will watch a video and learn about the psychology which enables authoritarians to gain and maintain power.

Materials

- **Google Slides deck** (optional)
- Video: "**The Brain on Authoritarianism**" (8:26, The Horizons Project and Beyond Conflict)
- Student Handout: Understanding Authoritarian Tactics graphic organizer (**Handout B**)

Procedure

1. Transition to the next activity by sharing the following information:

   Although many people believe democracy is worth defending, democracy has been declining around the world for the past twenty years.

   While some people are genuinely drawn to authoritarian political leaders or their belief systems, it takes a lot more effort to get others to go along with authoritarian practices. As authoritarian practices increase and leaders gain more power, vast numbers of people are gradually overwhelmed and worn down. In some cases, they begin to believe in the authoritarian regime. In other situations, they go with the flow and maintain the status quo in order to keep themselves or their loved ones safe.

   One tactic that authoritarians use to convince people to obey and cede power is to manipulate and take advantage of our psychological processes.

2. Divide students into pairs and distribute one Understanding Authoritarian Tactics graphic organizer (**Handout B**) to each pair. Explain that the video illuminates some of the psychological manipulations that authoritarians use in order to gain control. As they watch the video, students should be listening for:
   - Strategies authoritarians use to gain control
   - Reactions and emotions they exploit to maintain power
   - Effective strategies to counter these tactics
   - Collective actions to protect democracy.

   Inform students that you will pause at various intervals to give them time to fill out the graphic organizer.

TEACHING TIP

Technology-free classroom? A transcript of this video is available via **Google Docs**.

You can also use the transcript to help guide students to the appropriate responses for the graphic organizer–the bullet points on the transcript align with the sections on the graphic organizer.

[1] United Nations Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights, "About democracy and human rights," United Nations, **https://www.ohchr.org/en/about-democracy-and-human-rights**.

3. Watch "**The Brain on Authoritarianism**" (8:26), pausing at the following intervals to allow students to work with their partner:

   0:00-3:04
   - Instruct students to complete the "Strategies" section. Ask: *What strategies do authoritarians use to manipulate human psychology?*

   3:05-4:23
   - Instruct students to complete the "Reactions" section. Ask: *What are some of the psychological reactions that authoritarians take advantage of?*

   4:24-6:18
   - Instruct students to complete the "Counter Tactics" section. Ask: *What can we do as individuals to protect ourselves and others against this psychological manipulation?*

   6:19-8:26
   - Instruct students to complete the "Collective Actions" section. Ask: *What are some actions that we can take collectively to help defend democracy?*

4. Bring the class together. Go through each section of the graphic organizer, asking pairs to share their responses. Debrief with the following questions:
   - Have you noticed these tactics in real life, either in your country or elsewhere? If so, describe what you have noticed.
   - How does it make you feel to know that people in power can take advantage of how your brain works?
   - Taking collective action is important for all kinds of social change. What types of collective action are you familiar with? Have you ever been involved in collective action?

3 PRACTICING REGULATION *10 MINUTES*

Students will practice nervous system regulation by engaging in box breathing.

Materials

- **Google Slides deck** (optional)

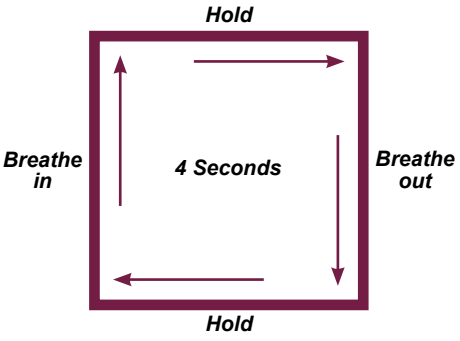
Procedure

1. Begin by asking students to think about how they react to stress. Not the stress induced by authoritarian leaders, but their everyday stresses and anxieties. Ask: *When you are feeling stressed, how do you calm yourself down?* Elicit responses from students, recording their responses on the board. Acknowledge the usefulness of the tactics that students shared and thank them for contributing to collective knowledge.

2. Share that maintaining a regulated nervous system is not only important in high stakes situations like resisting authoritarianism; it is also important because it allows us to approach situations from a more calm and regulated place.

   Explain that today you will practice one regulation technique together–box breathing.

3. Instruct students to get comfortable in their seats and close their eyes, visualizing a square. Share the following instructions, noting that for each count of 4, they can "move" along one of the sides of the box:
   - Breathe in through your nose for a count of 4.
   - Hold your breath for a count of 4.
   - Breathe out through your mouth for a count of 4.
   - Hold your breath for a count of 4.
   - Repeat.



4. Count aloud for two breath cycles. Pause the exercise, explaining that now that you have practiced together, each student should spend a few minutes practicing the exercise at their own pace.

   Allow a few minutes for students to practice box breathing.

5. At the close of the session, bring the class back together. Do a quick go around, asking students to share one word or phrase about how they feel following the exercise.

   Remind students that:

   - Box breathing is just one technique for regulating our nervous systems. There are many others, and different people find relief with different techniques.
   - Figure out a few tools that work for you and incorporate them into your daily life. As exploratory work on democracy and authoritarianism continues, students may find that they need regulatory tools in order to stay grounded.
   - *Refer to the student-generated list of calming techniques from the beginning of the activity:* Other students provided ideas for how they calm themselves down. Consider trying some of these ideas to see if any of them work for you.

TEACHING TIP

The Google Slides deck contains three graphics that illustrate box breathing. This may be helpful for students who do not wish to close their eyes or for students with aphantasia, a condition which prevents people from forming mental images.

ADDITIONAL MATERIALS

RESOURCES

Woven Teaching

Human Rights Education
woventeaching.org/human-rights-education

Learn more about Human Rights Education, a pedagogy rooted in advancing human rights through teaching that promotes cooperation, respect, and the dignity of all people.

Universal Declaration of Human Rights
woventeaching.org/udhr

From this page, students can access information about the history of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, as well as full text and student versions of the document.

Timothy Snyder

On Tyranny: Twenty Lessons from the Twentieth Century
New York: Tim Duggan Books, 2017

The framework created by Professor Timothy Snyder in *On Tyranny: Twenty Lessons from the Twentieth Century* provides the basis for the *Defending Democracy* curriculum.

Activities

Defining Democracy
Facing History and Ourselves
facinghistory.org/resource-library/defining-democracy

To spend more time exploring the concept of democracy, consider this lesson in which students "brainstorm different definitions of democracy and consider democracy's relationship to their own communities and cultures."

HANDOUT PRE- AND POST-ASSESSMENT

	PRE-ASSESSMENT				POST-ASSESSMENT			
	ABSOLUTELY, YES	I THINK SO, PROBABLY	I'M NOT SURE	NO	ABSOLUTELY, YES	I THINK SO, PROBABLY	I'M NOT SURE	NO
I understand the concept of democracy.								
I understand the concept of authoritarianism.								
I understand what a global citizen and a human rights defender are.								
I consider myself to be a global citizen and/or a human rights defender.								
I consider myself to be an activista and/or an organizer.								
I am likely to take action–big or small–to protect democracy and human rights.								
I am likely to continue learning about democracy and human rights even after the lessons have finished.								
I am likely to share about defending democracy and human rights with others in my community.								

Notes

HANDOUT UNDERSTANDING AUTHORITARIAN TACTICS

Complete the graphic organizer with information from "The Brain on Authoritarianism."

STRATEGIES

What strategies do authoritarians use to manipulate human psychology?

REACTIONS

What are some of the psychological reactions that authoritarians take advantage of?

COUNTER TACTICS

What can we do as individuals to protect ourselves and others against this psychological manipulation?

COLLECTIVE ACTIONS

What are some actions that we can take collectively to help defend democracy?

LESSON 2: DEMOCRATIC AND AUTHORITARIAN PRACTICES

> “History does not repeat, but it does instruct [...] We might be tempted to think that our democratic heritage automatically protects us from such threats. This is a misguided reflex.”
>
> *On Tyranny,* Prologue (pp. 9-13)

OVERVIEW

Content Level	Ages 14-18 (Grades 9-12)
Time	50 Minutes

Description	This lesson is designed to fit into one class period. Teachers should make adjustments as needed to meet the needs of their students. The lesson includes:
	• 2 Activities
	  • Individual Venn diagram activity to activate prior knowledge about democracy and authoritarianism
	  • All-class movement activity in which students develop and justify an opinion (orally and in writing) related to the state of democracy in their country
	• Exit Card Prompts

Guiding Questions	• What are examples of democratic practices? • What are examples of authoritarian practices? • What democratic and authoritarian elements are present in your country?
Learning Objectives	At the end of this lesson, students will be able to: • Identify key aspects of democratic and authoritarian governments. • Assess the political practices of their own country and categorize them as democratic or authoritarian.

Materials	• **Google Slides deck** (optional)
	• Student Handouts (also available digitally via **Google Docs**)
	  • **Venn Diagram**
	  • **Key Terms – Democracy and Authoritarianism**
	• Index cards or small slips of paper
	• Notebooks/journals

Common Core Standards *Learn more at **corestandards.org**.*	Speaking & Listening • CCSS.ELA-Literacy.SL.1 Language • CCSS.ELA-Literacy.L.1 • CCSS.ELA-Literacy.L.4
Social Justice Standards *These standards were created by Learning for Justice. Learn more at **bit.ly/LFJ-standards**.*	Diversity • DI.9-12.6 • DI.9-12.10 Justice • JU.9-12.12 Action • AC.9-12.17

INTRODUCTION

In his book *On Tyranny: Twenty Lessons from the Twentieth Century*, Historian and Yale University Professor Timothy Snyder offers practical actions that individuals can take to help stop the spread of authoritarianism. The lessons in the introductory section of *Defending Democracy* are intended to prepare students for the following twelve lessons that dive into the framework offered in *On Tyranny*. By establishing a base knowledge of democracy and authoritarianism, students will be better prepared to engage with Snyder's framework.

The activities in this lesson activate students' prior knowledge by asking them to categorize democratic and authoritarian practices. It also asks them to consider the state of democracy in their own country.

FOCUS ON HUMAN RIGHTS

Woven Teaching believes that **human rights education** is essential for students to understand and assert their own rights and to protect the rights of others. As a result, the **Universal Declaration of Human Rights** (UDHR) lies at the core of Woven Teaching's materials. The document's 30 articles outline fundamental human rights: basic rights and freedoms which every human being is entitled to, regardless of race, religion, birthplace, gender, sexual orientation, or other characteristics. Although its articles are not legally binding, the UDHR serves as a moral compass for the international community.

The activities in this lesson connect directly to several UDHR articles, including:

- **Article 3**: Right to life, freedom, and safety.
- **Article 10**: Right to a fair and public trial if you are accused of a crime.
- **Article 12**: Right to privacy.
- **Article 21**: Right to participate in your country's government.

ACTIVITIES

1 DEMOCRATIC AND AUTHORITARIAN PRACTICES *25 MINUTES*

Students will activate prior knowledge about democracy and authoritarianism by completing a Venn diagram.

Materials

- **Google Slides deck** (optional)
- Student Handouts (also available digitally via **Google Docs**)
  - » Venn Diagram (**Handout A**)
  - » Key Terms – Democracy and Authoritarianism (**Handout B**)

Procedure

1. Explain that today's class will explore elements of democratic and authoritarian societies. As the world becomes increasingly less democratic, authoritarian leaders and movements are gaining power.[1] Because authoritarian practices are often at odds with human rights, it is important for people to recognize and fight back against authoritarian practices when they appear.

2. Begin with a brainstorm on following questions:
   - Recall prior knowledge: What does *democracy* mean? What does *authoritarian* mean?
   - What are some elements of democratic and authoritarian societies?
   - What are some examples of democratic or authoritarian countries, today and historically?

   Record student responses on the board.

[1] Yana Gorokhovskaia and Cathryn Grothe, "The Mounting Damage of Flawed Elections and Armed Conflict," Freedom House, February 2024, **https://freedomhouse.org/report/freedom-world/2024/mounting-damage-flawed-elections-and-armed-conflict**.

3. After a few minutes, provide each student with a Venn diagram (**Handout A**) and Key Terms sheet (**Handout B**). Instruct students to fill out the Venn diagram using both ideas from the class brainstorm and the Key Terms. Before beginning, model the activity by choosing a few terms, asking students where they think they should go, and why.

TEACHING TIP

Prefer a digital option? Ask each student to make a copy of **this slideshow**. A textbox with each key term is located to the left of the slide. Students can drag and drop each of the terms into the diagram or create text boxes to add their own.

4. After they have added at least 10 terms to the diagram, ask students to write explanations for their placement of three terms: one term from each section of the diagram. Explanations should include:
    - Why does this term belong in that section (democratic, authoritarian, or in the middle)?
    - How does this term relate to democracy or authoritarianism?
    - What are some examples of this term from history or the present?

5. After students have completed their diagrams, debrief as a class by asking a few volunteers to share some of their answers, including justifications for their term placements. You may also ask students to discuss the following questions:
    - Think about one of the practices that you labeled democratic. What could a young person do to protect or promote this practice?
    - Think about one of the practices that you labeled authoritarian. What could a young person do to counter this practice?
    - In the West, there is a common belief that democracy is the superior form of government. Do you agree or disagree, and why?

2 WHAT ABOUT MY COUNTRY? *20 MINUTES*

Students will develop an opinion about the state of democracy in their country.

Materials

- **Google Slides deck** (optional)
- Notebooks/journals

Procedure

1. Instruct students to move to the center of the room, and share the following information:

    Democracy and authoritarianism exist on a spectrum. Democratic countries sometimes have authoritarian elements, and authoritarian countries can have some of the freedoms associated with democratic states. Imagine a line across the room – a spectrum between democracy and authoritarianism. The left wall represents total democracy, and the right wall represents total authoritarianism. Take a moment to consider the last activity and the practices associated with each. ***Where does your country fall on the spectrum? Move to that place along the spectrum.***

2. After students have shifted into position, ask a few students to explain their position. Respectful debate of different opinions should be encouraged. Students should also be encouraged to move positions during the discussion if they change their opinion.

3. Ask students to return to their seats and spend a few minutes explaining their position in writing. Responses should include a drawing of the spectrum (a line) with an indication of where they think the country falls on that spectrum. Their writing should also include references to some of the practices mentioned in the first activity, as well as historical and contemporary examples (where possible). After students have finished writing, bring the class together and ask a few students to summarize what they wrote.

4. Conclude by asking students to share their opinion and whether it has changed based on what their classmates have shared. *If so, how? Are students surprised by their classmates' assessments? What could a person do to help make the country more democratic?*

3 CLOSING: EXIT CARD *5 MINUTES*

Students will complete an exit card, reflecting on democratic and authoritarian systems and their impact on human rights.

Materials

- **Google Slides deck** (optional)
- Index cards or small slips of paper

Procedure

1. Before distributing the "exit cards" (index cards), remind students that most countries do not contain only democratic elements or only authoritarian elements; many fall somewhere in the middle of the two extremes.

2. Provide each student with an index card and ask them to respond to at least two of the following questions:
    - What did you learn today that will be useful in your everyday life?
    - What questions do you have about today's lesson?
    - Do you think that all countries would benefit from democratic practices? Do all residents of a country benefit from it being democratic? Why or why not?
    - Why do you think some people around the world support authoritarian practices? Are there benefits to authoritarian systems?
    - How do you think the type of system–democratic or authoritarian–affects human rights in a country?

3. You may wish to begin the next class session by reading some of the student responses (anonymously) or by answering questions they shared.

RESOURCES

Woven Teaching

Human Rights Education
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Universal Declaration of Human Rights
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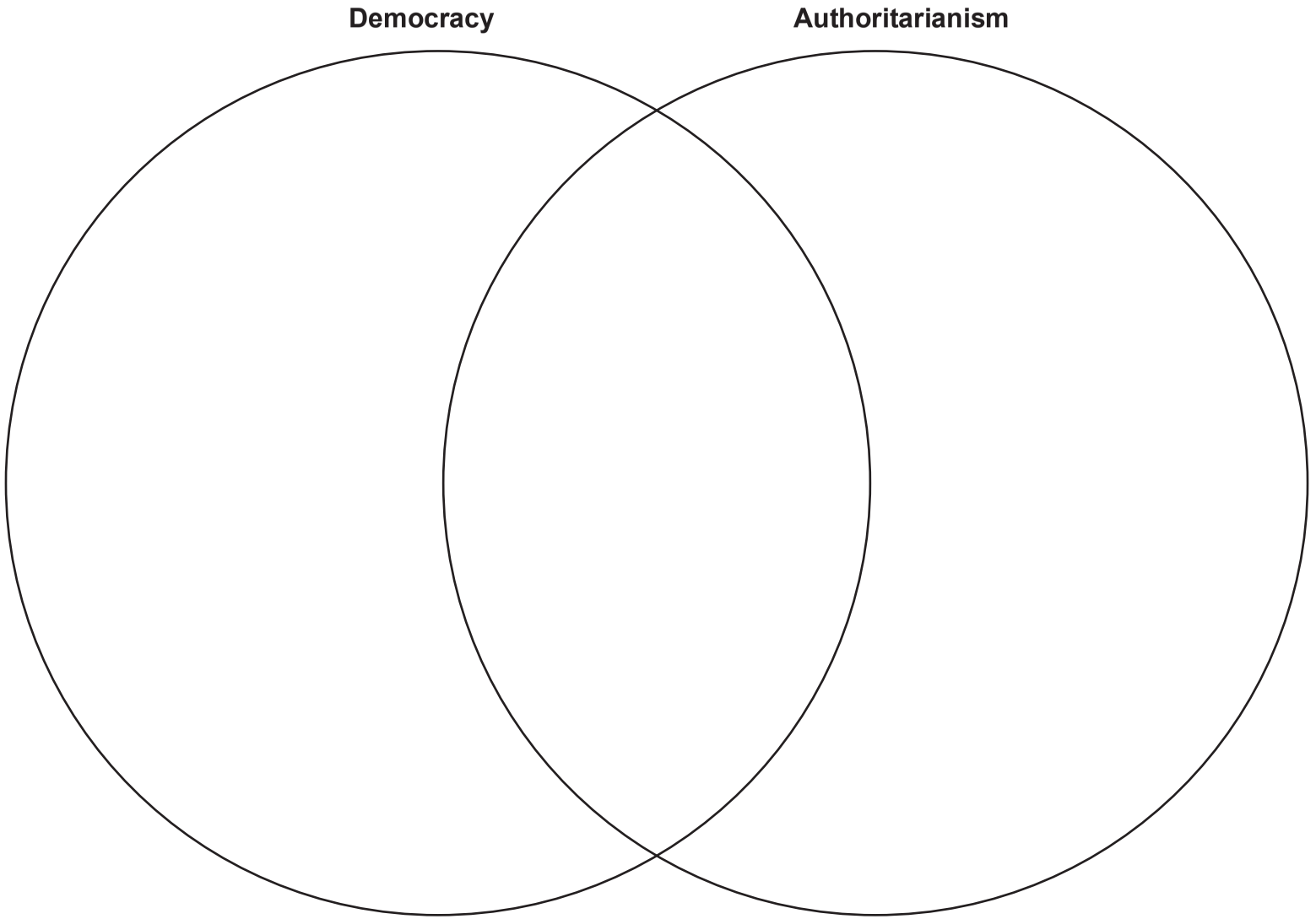
Activities

Authoritarianism: How You Know It When You See It
Horizons Project (via The Commons: Social Change Library)
commonslibrary.org/authoritarianism-how-you-know-it-when-you-see-it

This short introductory webpage defines what authoritarianism is and what it is not. It also includes tips on how to push back against authoritarianism.

HANDOUT ELEMENTS OF DEMOCRACY AND AUTHORITARIANISM



On the back of this sheet, choose one term from each of the three sections and respond to the following prompts for each term:

- Why do you think this term belongs in that section?
- How does that term relate to democracy or authoritarianism?
- What are some examples of this term from history or the present?

HANDOUT KEY TERMS – DEMOCRACY AND AUTHORITARIANISM

access to information: the right to ask for and access public information (e.g., from the government)

accountability: the willingness to accept responsibility for one's actions

concentrated power: authority and decision-making power held by a single person or group

constitution: a written document outlining a country's basic principles and laws

corruption: dishonest or illegal behavior, especially by people in power (e.g., politicians, police officers, etc.)

disinformation: information that is deliberately created or shared with the intention to misinform and mislead others, usually to achieve a desired ideological, political, or financial result

economic inequality: the unequal distribution of wealth and opportunity between different groups of society; the gap between the rich and poor

efficiency: being able to spend less time or money to achieve an output

exclusion: the state of being left out; the act of preventing someone from participating in an activity

fair judiciary: a court system in which judges make their decisions based on law, without influence, fear, or other external factors

fraud: a deceitful act done for profit or to gain some unfair advantage

free and fair elections: elections in which all voters are able to vote for their candidate of choice, without undue influence or coercion, and in which all votes are counted accurately

freedom of expression: the freedom to express one's opinions; the right to say what you want and to share information

hierarchy: a ranking of positions of authority

inclusion: the state of being included

independent media: media (TV, newspapers, blogs, etc.) which is free from government influence or corporate interests

internet freedom: an umbrella term which includes the right to access the internet, freedom from internet censorship, and the exercise of human rights online

political opposition: political candidates or parties who are opposed to the ruling government

populism: the idea that society is divided into two groups–the people and the elite–who are at odds with each other. Populist politicians claim to be working for the benefit of the common people.

separation of powers: the division of a government into branches with separate, independent powers

social equality: equal treatment and opportunity for members of different groups within society (e.g., both majority groups and historically marginalized groups receive the same treatment)

surveillance: close observation; the monitoring of behavior or information

repression: use of force or intimidation by a government to suppress political opposition

use of force: a physical effort used to control or overcome resistance from another person; violence (e.g., beating, shooting, etc.)

LESSON 3: CONTEMPORARY DEMOCRACY AND AUTHORITARIANISM

> Democracy failed in Europe in the 1920s, '30s, and '40s, and it is failing not only in much of Europe but in many parts of the world today. It is that history and experience that reveals to us the dark range of our possible futures. A nationalist will say 'it can't happen here,' which is the first step toward disaster. A patriot says that it could happen here, but that we will stop it."
>
> *On Tyranny,* Chapter 19 (p. 114)

OVERVIEW

Content Level	Ages 14-18 (Grades 9-12)
Time	50 Minutes

Description	This lesson is designed to fit into one class period. Teachers should make adjustments as needed to meet the needs of their students. The lesson includes:
	• 1 Preparatory Homework Assignment
	• 2 Activities
	  • Small group case study analysis in which students read an overview of real political practices in a country and complete a worksheet
	  • All-class closing activity in which students write "analog social media posts" reflecting on what they learned, then share with the class
	• 1 Extension Activity

Guiding Questions	• What freedoms and restrictions do people face in different countries around the world? • What do democratic and authoritarian practices look like in the real world?
Learning Objectives	At the end of this lesson, students will be able to: • Identify democratic and authoritarian practices. • Assess conditions related to the support or weakening of democracy and human rights.

Materials	• **Google Slides deck** (optional)
	• Student Handouts (also available digitally via **Google Docs**)
	  • **Universal Declaration of Human Rights – Student Version**
	  • **Country Profiles**
	  • **Practices in…**
	• Sticky notes

Common Core Standards *Learn more at **corestandards.org**.*	Reading: Informational Text • CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.1 Speaking & Listening • CCSS.ELA-Literacy.SL.1
Social Justice Standards *These standards were created by Learning for Justice. Learn more at **bit.ly/LFJ-standards**.*	Diversity • DI.9-12.6 • DI.9-12.8 • DI.9-12.10 Justice • JU.9-12.12 • JU.9-12.13

INTRODUCTION

In his book *On Tyranny: Twenty Lessons from the Twentieth Century*, Historian and Yale University Professor Timothy Snyder offers practical actions that individuals can take to help stop the spread of authoritarianism. The lessons in the introductory section of *Defending Democracy* are intended to prepare students for the following twelve lessons that dive into the framework offered in *On Tyranny*. By establishing a base knowledge of democracy and authoritarianism, students will be better prepared to engage more deeply with Snyder's framework.

The activities in this lesson ask students to explore real-world examples of democratic and authoritarian practices from across the globe.

Note: Unless students are already familiar with democratic and authoritarian practices, Lesson 2 of the Defending Democracy *curriculum, "Democratic and Authoritarian Practices," is an important prerequisite for this lesson. It introduces students to terms and concepts that they will need to identify in this lesson's activities.*

FOCUS ON HUMAN RIGHTS

Woven Teaching believes that **human rights education** is essential for students to understand and assert their own rights and to protect the rights of others. As a result, the **Universal Declaration of Human Rights** (UDHR) lies at the core of Woven Teaching's materials. The document's 30 articles outline fundamental human rights: basic rights and freedoms which every human being is entitled to, regardless of race, religion, birthplace, gender, sexual orientation, or other characteristics. Although its articles are not legally binding, the UDHR serves as a moral compass for the international community.

The activities in this lesson connect directly to several UDHR articles, including:

- **Article 3**: Right to life, freedom, and safety.
- **Article 10**: Right to a fair and public trial if you are accused of a crime.
- **Article 12**: Right to privacy.
- **Article 19**: Right to freedom of opinion and expression.
- **Article 20**: Right to participate in organizations and organize peaceful protests and meetings.

ACTIVITIES

PREPARATORY HOMEWORK: WHAT ARE HUMAN RIGHTS?

Students will review the United Nations' Universal Declaration of Human Rights and consider which rights are most important to upholding democracy.

Materials

- **Google Slides deck** (optional)
- Student Handout: Universal Declaration of Human Rights – Student Version (**Handout A**)

Procedure

1. Share the following information with students:

   Human rights are rights that belong to all people. Human rights are inherent to all human beings, regardless of race, sex, nationality, ethnicity, language, faith, or any other characteristics. Human rights include the right to life and liberty, freedom from slavery and torture, freedom of speech and opinion, the right to education, and many more. Everybody is entitled to these rights without exception.

   The Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) is a document that outlines basic human rights for all individuals. The UDHR's 30 articles were adopted by the United Nations General Assembly in December 1948.

The UDHR outlines fundamental civil, political, economic, social, and cultural rights that must be protected for all people. Although the UDHR is not legally enforceable, its standards have become global measures worldwide.

2. Distribute a copy of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights – Student Version (**Handout A**) to each student. Instruct students to read the handout, marking the three articles that they feel are most important for protecting democracy.

   Note: Students will need to refer to this handout during Activity 1. Please remind students to bring the handout back with them to the next class session.

3. At the beginning of the next class session, ask a few volunteers to share which articles they chose, and why.

TEACHING TIP If you wish to do a deeper introduction to human rights with your students, Woven Teaching's ***Free & Equal: Human Rights Around the World*** offers a comprehensive introduction to the UDHR, including examples related to each of the Declaration's 30 articles. *Free & Equal* takes approximately 3 hours to complete.

1 PRACTICES AROUND THE WORLD *35 MINUTES*

Students will analyze case studies about governments around the globe, learning how democratic and authoritarian practices show up in the real world.

Materials

- **Google Slides deck** (optional)
- Student Handouts
  - » Universal Declaration of Human Rights – Student Version (**Handout A**)
  - » Country Profile (**Handout B**)
    - **Belarus**
    - **Ecuador**
    - **Nigeria**
    - **Samoa**
    - **Sri Lanka**
    - **Turkey**
  - » Practices in… (**Handout C**)
- Computer/internet access for each student (optional)

TEACHING TIP This lesson contains six case studies which have been chosen for geographic and cultural diversity. Should you wish to create additional case studies (specific to your students' countries or regions of origin, for example), helpful websites include:

- **Country Profiles** (BBC News)
- **World Factbook** (Central Intelligence Agency)
- **Geography and Travel** (Encyclopaedia Britannica)
- **UN Data** (United Nations)

Procedure

1. Ask students to recall some of the democratic and authoritarian practices from the previous lesson. Explain that students will now have the opportunity to learn how some of these practices operate in countries around the world.

2. Distribute a Country Profile (**Handout B**) to each student. Instruct students to read their handouts individually, circling democratic elements and underlining authoritarian elements.

   You may wish to share the following information with students before they begin:

   - Because society and politics are always evolving, the situation in these countries may have changed since the handouts were written (June 2024). Encourage curious students to do research on their case studies outside of class.

- The information from these case studies generally comes from Western-based organizations and therefore may be biased with Western perspectives.

3. After reading their case studies, ask students to find a partner with the same case study and complete the "Practices in…" worksheet (**Handout C**) together. Students should refer to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (**Handout A**) to help them answer the last question on the worksheet.

4. Bring the class together for a debrief. Go through the questions on the handout, asking for volunteers to share examples from their case studies. Consider incorporating the following questions to further the discussion:
   - What surprised you about your case study?
   - Are there similarities across countries/regions?
   - Did you read about any practices that you support? Any that you oppose?

5. Time permitting, instruct students to find the narrative report for the country they were assigned on the **Freedom House website**. Ask: *How did their country rank? Does Freedom House's assessment match their conclusion?*

   Rankings for the case studies included in this lesson (based on Freedom House's 2024 reports):

   - Belarus: 8/100 – Not free
   - Ecuador: 67/100 – Partly free
   - Nigeria: 44/100 – Partly free
   - Samoa: 84/100 – Free
   - Sri Lanka: 54/100 – Partly free
   - Turkey: 33/100 – Not free

2 ANALOG SOCIAL MEDIA *15 MINUTES*

Students will summarize what they have learned by writing a social media post.

Materials

- **Google Slides deck** (optional)
- Sticky notes
- **Padlet** or other digital bulletin board (optional)

Procedure

1. Distribute a sticky note to each student (or direct them to the digital bulletin board). Ask them to spend a few minutes writing a social media post about any of the following topics:
   - Something they've learned today
   - Something they found interesting from today's lesson
   - A question they have

   Some social media networks limit the number of characters in each post. For this activity, student posts must be 280 characters or fewer.

2. Ask students to share their posts.
   - If using sticky notes: Instruct students to approach the front of the class, read their post, and stick it to the board. A student with a related/connected post then does the same. The process continues until all students have shared their posts.

   - If using a digital bulletin board: Ask students to share their post, then respond to at least two of their classmates' posts.

   Begin by modeling: Share a post about something you found interesting from the lesson, then provide an example of what kinds of posts might connect to your own.

   Example: If you write, "I think it's interesting that 40% of all elected officials in Belarus are women but women's rights don't seem to be respected in the country," a student with a post related to Belarus, women/gender divisions, or elected officials could share the next post.

EXTENSION ACTIVITY: COMPARING COUNTRIES

Students will conduct research and compare and contrast the democratic and authoritarian elements of two countries.

Materials

- Website: **Freedom House**
- Computer/internet access for each student (at home or at the library)

Procedure

1. Explain that Freedom House is a US-based non-governmental organization whose mission is to "advance policies that strengthen democracy and protect human rights." Much of the information in the case studies from Activity 1 comes from Freedom House's **narrative reports**.

2. As homework or during another class period, instruct students to use the Freedom House website to look up the country they were assigned, then read the narrative report of another country of their choice

   *Note: You can also use a **random generator** to assign countries.*

3. In a project of their choosing (essay, presentation, poster, etc.) students will compare/contrast the democratic and authoritarian elements of the two countries.

4. Students will present their projects at a future class session.

RESOURCES

Woven Teaching

Free & Equal: Human Rights Around the World
woventeaching.org/lessons/free-and-equal

In this lesson, students will explore the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and have the opportunity to analyze case studies from around the world.

Human Rights Education
woventeaching.org/human-rights-education

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Activities

Global Freedom Score – Countries and Territories
Freedom House
freedomhouse.org/countries/freedom-world/scores

Educators can use this directory to navigate to country-specific reports on the state of freedom around the world (including to the reports for the countries in Activity 1).

HANDOUT UNIVERSAL DECLARATION OF HUMAN RIGHTS – STUDENT VERSION

Article 1	All human beings are born equal in dignity and in rights.
Article 2	These rights belong to everyone. You should never be discriminated against.
Article 3	You have the right to life, liberty, and safety.
Article 4	No one can hold you in slavery.
Article 5	No one can torture you or treat you in a cruel or degrading way.
Article 6	Everyone has rights, no matter where they are.
Article 7	Laws should be applied the same way for everyone.
Article 8	You have the right to seek justice and remedy (repair) if your rights are not respected.
Article 9	You cannot be imprisoned or thrown out of a country without a good reason.
Article 10	You have the right to a fair and public trial.
Article 11	You have the right to be presumed innocent until proven guilty.
Article 12	You have a right to privacy. No one can enter your home, read your mail, or bother you without good reason.
Article 13	You have the right to move and travel within your country and internationally.
Article 14	You have the right to seek protection from another country (asylum) if your country treats you poorly.
Article 15	You have the right to be a citizen of a country (have a nationality).
Article 16	Every consenting adult has the right to get married and have a family.
Article 17	You have the right to own property.
Article 18	You have the right to practice any religion.
Article 19	You have the right to express your opinion.
Article 20	You have the right to gather with others and protest publicly.
Article 21	You have the right to participate in the government of your country (e.g., vote).
Article 22	You have the right to have your basic needs met (e.g. through social security programs).
Article 23	You have the right to work, to receive equal pay for equal work, and to join a union.
Article 24	You have the right to rest from work.
Article 25	You have the right to an adequate standard of living, including housing, food, and medical care.
Article 26	You have the right to an education.
Article 27	No one can stop you from participating in your community's cultural life.
Article 28	Everyone must respect the social order that allows these rights to exist.
Article 29	Everyone must respect the rights of others.
Article 30	No one can take any of the rights in this declaration away from you.

HANDOUT COUNTRY PROFILE: BELARUS

Location	Eastern Europe
Population	9.5 million
Area	207,600 sq. kilometers (slightly smaller than Kansas)
GDP	$72.7 billion ($7,888 per capita)
Major ethnicities	Belarusian (83.7%), Russian (8.3%)
Major religions	Orthodox (48%), non-believers (41%)

Belarus is located in Eastern Europe. Its current borders were established during World War II, when the country was occupied by Nazi Germany. Formerly part of the Soviet Union, Belarus gained its independence in 1991.

In 1994, Alexander Lukashenko won the country's first presidential election. During his campaign, he promised to fight corruption and re-establish close ties with Russia. He was re-elected in 2001. Many Western countries believed that the election was rigged. When Lukashenko reached his two-term limit in 2004, voters approved the elimination of presidential term limits.[1] In the elections that have followed, many people in Belarus and internationally questioned whether Lukashenko won fairly. Independent election observers are sometimes allowed in Belarus, but they often face interference.

As of 2024, Lukashenko remains president of Belarus. His last opponent was forced into exile in Lithuania the day after the 2020 election. In 2023, she was tried *in absentia* (while not present) and sentenced to 15 years in prison.

Following each presidential election, Belarusians have taken to the streets in protest of the results. Often, protests have been broken up by force (including the use of live ammunition) and many people have been arrested. Private citizens have few opportunities to express their views publicly.

Political activism can result in threats, loss of employment, criminal charges, and other penalties. Surveillance by state security agencies is common. For this reason, some Belarusians do not discuss sensitive topics over the phone or on the internet. The government owns the only internet service provider and controls the mainstream media. It has the power to block webpages and limit access to social media platforms.

Political parties face restrictions and obstacles in Belarus. As of October 2023, there are only four political parties in the country, and all are aligned with Lukashenko's government. Legislative elections in Belarus are tightly controlled. In the 2019 parliamentary elections, independent candidates did not win any seats. Parliament rarely introduces its own legislation; it always supports legislation introduced by Lukashenko.

[1] The constitution was amended in 2021 and reinstated term limits. This does not go into effect until the election of 2025. This would allow Lukashenko to remain in power until 2035.

Over the past several years, the government has dissolved groups which represent the interests of marginalized communities. Same-sex marriage is illegal and LGBTQIA+ individuals face widespread discrimination and persecution. While the constitution of Belarus guarantees religious equality, registration requirements for religious groups largely restrict religious activity.

Women technically enjoy equal political rights and make up 40 percent of Belarusian legislators; however, they are banned from dozens of occupations. Domestic violence is a widespread problem in the country, and Lukashenko has blocked legislation seeking to prevent gender-based violence.

The president appoints all judges of the Supreme Court. Following a 5-year probationary term, Supreme Court justices are appointed for life. Some lower court judges are appointed by the president while others are appointed by the Council of the Republic–the upper chamber of the legislature.

The police regularly use physical force and the government routinely denies defendants the right to meet with their lawyer. Opponents of the regime are often sentenced to prison or forced into exile.

HANDOUT COUNTRY PROFILE: ECUADOR

Location	South America
Population	18.3 million
Area	283,561 sq. kilometers (slightly smaller than Nevada)
GDP	$115 billion ($6,391 per capita)
Major ethnicities	Mestizo–mixed Indigenous and white (77.5%), Montubio–mixed Indigenous and white (7.7%), Indigenous (7.7%)
Major religions	Roman Catholic (68.2%), Protestant (19%)

Ecuador is located in South America. It is bordered by the Pacific Ocean to the west, Colombia to the north, and Peru to the south/east. Prior to colonization by the Spanish in 1533, Ecuador formed part of the Inca Empire. It established its independence in 1830.

Guillermo Lasso Mendoza was elected president of Ecuador in 2021. In 2023, a majority of the National Assembly voted to impeach Lasso. In Ecuador, the president has the ability to dissolve the parliament, and Lasso did this following the impeachment vote. He ruled by decree for several months until elections were held and a new president and legislature were elected.

Ecuador is home to many political parties. In order to participate in general elections, parties must collect voter signatures. As long as they get enough signatures (1.5 percent of the total eligible voters), they can participate. Opposition parties dominate the legislature.

While there are many political parties in Ecuador, political choices are often limited by criminal groups and violence. Political assassinations are not uncommon; five candidates were murdered in the lead up to the 2023 election, including a presidential candidate running on an anti-corruption platform.

Ecuador's highest courts in the country are largely independent. Courts throughout the country, however, have been accused of refusing to apply the law to drug traffickers. Many people are held in pretrial detention for longer than is permitted by law, and the state is unable to provide all defendants with legal counsel.

Ecuador's constitution includes nondiscrimination clauses and provisions for affirmative action measures; however, Indigenous people suffer discrimination and are often left out of decision-making, especially as it relates to land and resources. Freedom of religion is generally respected in the country, as is academic freedom and the right of same-sex couples to marry.

Ecuadorians can largely speak their mind openly, but there is a risk of being targeted by criminal groups as a result. On the other hand, members of the media face harassment and attacks. In 2023, several journalists fled from Ecuador after receiving death threats. Both the government and criminal groups have an interest in controlling the media.

Protests are sometimes met with violence from the State, but other times they occur without incident. Violence is largely perpetrated by criminal groups associated with the drug trade. It is also perpetrated by the military and police on members of criminal groups and incarcerated people. Allegations of police abuse are common in Ecuador, despite recent laws regulating the use of force.

HANDOUT COUNTRY PROFILE: NIGERIA

Location	West Africa
Population	236.7 million
Area	923,768 sq. kilometers (slightly more than two times the size of California)
GDP	$472.6 billion ($2,162 per capita)
Major ethnicities	Hausa (30%), Yoruba (15.5%), Igbo (15.2%)
Major religions	Muslim (53.5%), Christian (35.3%), Roman Catholic (10.6%)

Nigeria is located in West Africa. It is the largest country (by population) on the African continent. Nigeria was colonized by the British in the 19th century and gained independence in 1960.

There are many political parties in Nigeria. In 2018, the president of Nigeria signed the "Not Too Young to Run" bill into law, lowering the age of eligibility to run for office from 40 to 35. Political choices, however, are impeded by vote buying and intimidation from powerful domestic and international actors.

These problems were present during the 2023 presidential election, which had many issues. Election observers expressed concern over a delay in the opening of polling stations, and a delayed announcement of the results–possibly allowing time for vote tampering. Many petitions were filed by opposition candidates and parties challenging the outcome of the election, but Nigeria's Supreme Court upheld the results.

In Nigeria, elected officials make policy, but corruption and lack of control over areas where militant groups are active can mean that some of these policies aren't implemented. The government has attempted to reduce corruption in recent years. In 2016, it instituted a whistleblowing policy that encourages people to speak out against corruption. As a result, several high-ranking officials have been arrested.

On the other hand, journalists have been harassed and arrested for covering issues such as corruption and human rights violations. Although freedom of expression and press are constitutionally guaranteed, at least 45 attacks on journalists occurred in the first three months of 2023. Additionally, journalists and non-governmental organizations report difficulty in getting information from the government, despite the Freedom of Information Act which guarantees the right to access public records.

Religious freedom exists in Nigeria, but state and local authorities have been known to endorse "official" religions in their territories. This has limited some religious activities. Peaceful assembly and freedom of expression are guaranteed in the constitution; however, these are not always protected in practice. Nigerians can generally speak their minds, but views that are critical of political leaders, the military, or certain ethnicities can lead to arrest. Similarly, the government has sometimes banned events that it perceives as threats to national security. In

2020, at least twenty people were killed when police fired into a protesting crowd. International observers believe that conditions have improved in recent years.

There have been many allegations of blackmail and bribe-taking within the police force. Due process is not always respected–some people have been held in pretrial detention even after the court has granted their release on bail. The military has also been accused of crimes such as torture and abuse.

Ethnic minorities, women, and members of the LGBTQIA+ community experience discrimination in Nigeria. Some northern states use the death penalty for same-sex relationships, and people have been arrested for merely attending a same-sex wedding. Despite the existence of laws against rape, female genital mutilation, and child marriage, these practices remain widespread.

The presence of armed groups in Nigeria is a major challenge facing the government.

HANDOUT COUNTRY PROFILE: SAMOA

Location	Oceania
Population	208,800
Area	2,831 sq. kilometers (smaller than Rhode Island)
GDP	$832.9 million ($3,745 per capita)
Major ethnicities	Samoan (96%), Samoan/New Zealander (2%)
Major religions	Protestant (54.9%), Roman Catholic (18.8%)

Samoa is a small island country in the Pacific Ocean, about halfway between Hawaii and New Zealand. Germany colonized Samoa in the late 19th century, and it was occupied by New Zealand during World War I. Samoa gained its independence in 1962.

In Samoa, holders of family chief titles are called *matai*. Approximately two percent of *matai* are women. Elections in Samoa are generally free and fair, but *matai* are the only people who can run for office, which limits the ability of some people to participate in politics–particularly women. By law, however, ten percent of the parliament must be made up of women. If fewer than that number are elected, then women who lost their elections (but got the most votes out of the women candidates) are awarded additional seats.

Some *matai* have been accused of attempting to influence elections by endorsing certain candidates over others, and people who have tried to challenge these preferred candidates have been punished.

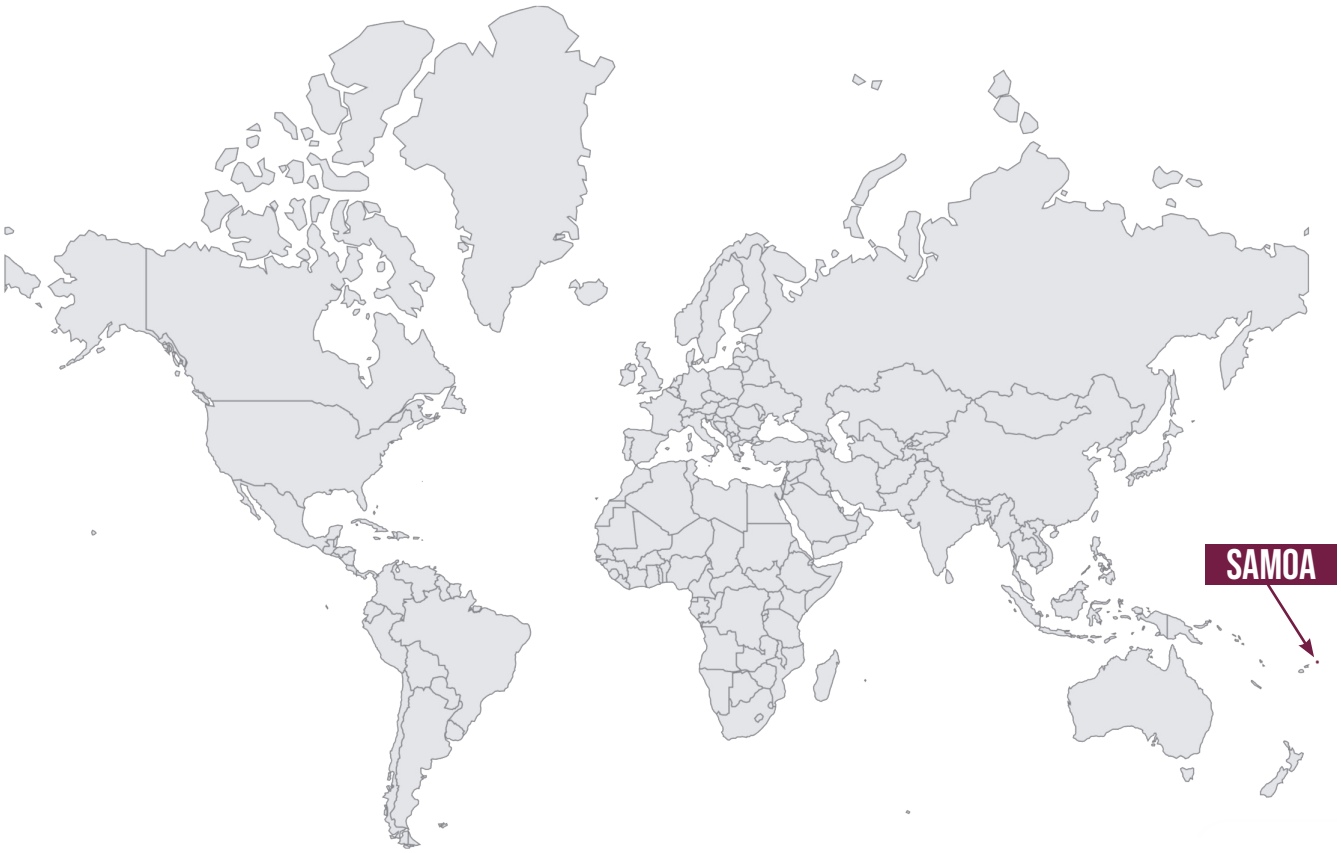
Samoa has two leaders. Following custom, the head of state is chosen by Parliament from one of the four paramount chiefs. The head of state is a ceremonial role, but they have the ability to choose the prime minister (the head of the government).

Political parties are allowed in Samoa, but must win eight seats in Parliament in order to be officially recognized. Opposition parties and politicians do not face major threats, and the Supreme Court has previously blocked attempts by the majority party in Parliament to remove opposition members. Samoa is believed to have a fairly independent judicial system.

In Samoa, there are safeguards against arbitrary arrest and detention. Most people get a fair trial. Despite this, the system is not perfect. Some police officers have been accused of physical abuse and poor conditions (such as overcrowding) abound in prisons. Also, village councils have the authority to give traditional punishments, including banishment.

Journalists are mostly independent in Samoa; however, they report having trouble getting information from the government. On occasion, they may be sued for libel or defamation if they write a story about someone powerful and that person does not like it. In some cases, this acts to silence some journalists.

The constitution prohibits discrimination based on ethnicity, sex, religion, and other characteristics, but this is enforced unevenly. Ethnic Chinese people and women face discrimination, as do gender-diverse Samoans. Freedom of expression and religion are guaranteed, but there is social pressure to engage in church activities.



HANDOUT COUNTRY PROFILE: SRI LANKA

Location	South Asia
Population	21.9 million
Area	65,600 sq. kilometers (slightly larger than West Virginia)
GDP	$74.4 billion ($3,354 per capita)
Major ethnicities	Sinhalese (74.9%), Sri Lankan Tamil (11.2%)
Major religions	Buddhist (70.2%), Hindu (12.6%), Muslim (9.7%)

Sri Lanka is an island country in South Asia, located off of the southeastern coast of India. European colonizers arrived in Sri Lanka in 1505–first the Portuguese, then the Dutch and the British. A British colony for nearly 150 years, Sri Lanka proclaimed its independence in 1948. From 1983-2009, the country endured a brutal civil war between government forces and ethnic Tamil separatists. Approximately 100,000 people were killed over the 26-year conflict.

In 2022, the government of Sri Lanka announced that the country was experiencing the worst economic crisis since the country's independence. Food and fuel shortages, along with skyrocketing inflation, led to massive protests around the country. In July 2022, protesters stormed the president's house. As a result, he fled the country and resigned.

Protests occur often in Sri Lanka. It is not uncommon for these protests and the activists who participate in them to be surveilled. The government has been accused of using antiterrorism laws as a means of silencing dissent. Police forces have been accused of violence against protesters, including torture and forced disappearances. Ethnic Tamils, who compose 11 percent of the population, are disproportionately targeted by security forces.

In 2023, the Election Commission (which oversees all elections in Sri Lanka) postponed voting for local elections due to lack of funding. The elections had already been postponed from the previous year. The following month, the government postponed the elections indefinitely.

A range of political parties are allowed to operate freely in Sri Lanka; however, women, Muslims, and Tamil voters often face intimidation during elections. This discrimination carries into other sectors: Tamils report discrimination in employment, education, and access to justice. Likewise, anti-Muslim riots have taken place, and violence against women and children is common. Despite the challenges women face, there are quotas in place to ensure that 25 percent of political seats at the local level are occupied by women.

Due process can be limited in Sri Lanka. People can be detained for up to two years without trial. Corruption is fairly widespread, though anti-corruption legislation was passed in 2023. Politicians often do not call out political opponents for corruption for fear of being later prosecuted themselves.

Freedom of the press is guaranteed by the constitution of Sri Lanka. In practice, however,

journalists may self-censor and often do not challenge the government. Academic freedom is also generally respected, but there are reports of intolerance towards academics who are critical of the government or who call out human rights abuses. In some cases, parents have to bribe local education officials so that their children are able to attend primary school.

The civil war is a very sensitive topic in Sri Lanka. The government is believed to monitor activists, minority groups, and non-governmental organizations who focus on issues such as military impunity or alleged war crimes.

HANDOUT COUNTRY PROFILE: TURKEY

Location	West Asia
Population	84.1 million
Area	783,562 sq. kilometers (slightly larger than Texas)
GDP	$907.1 billion ($10,674 per capita)
Major ethnicities	Turkish (70-75%), Kurdish (19%)
Major religions	Muslim (99.8%)

Turkey is located in West Asia. Once part of the Ottoman Empire, the modern state of Turkey was established in 1923. As of June 2024, Recep Tayyip Erdogan is the president of Turkey. He spent 11 years as Turkey's prime minister before becoming the country's president in 2014.

Following an attempted coup in 2016, Erdogan and the ruling Justice and Development Party (AKP) tightened their grip on the government. They purged the government of anyone suspected of opposing the AKP and replaced them with people who support Erdogan. In 2018, Turkey instituted a presidential system of government, which substantially increased Erdogan's powers. Erdogan makes all major policy decisions.

Opposition parties are allowed to operate in Turkey, but often face harassment and attacks. Leaders of opposition parties are sometimes imprisoned and charged with terrorism or insulting the president. Although the AKP uses the judiciary, police, and the media to try to weaken political rivals, opposition parties have been successful in local elections in recent years.

The judiciary is largely beholden to Erdogan and the AKP. Judges who rule against the government's wishes have lost their jobs. Those supportive of the government have received promotions. Due process is also limited; some people have spent up to seven years in jail without being convicted of a crime.

Most Turkish media outlets are state-run or owned by businesses with ties to Erdogan. The independent outlets that do exist are often censored, fined, or shut down. Journalists who are critical of the government are sometimes detained and face criminal charges. They have a difficult time obtaining accurate information from the government. The government has been accused of publishing distorted data to downplay the country's problems.

The government monitors the internet, which contributes to a culture of self-censorship. In February 2023, 78 people were detained for social media posts that were critical of the government's response to a major earthquake.

Although Turkey's constitution defines the country as a secular state, Sunni Muslim mosques and schools are entitled to government funding while schools/sites of worship of other religions are not. Non-Muslims also face social discrimination. Other groups, including LGBTQIA+

people, experience discrimination in Turkey as well, and top state officials have publicly engaged in homophobic hate speech. The country also has some of the highest rates of femicide (murder of women) and gender-based violence in the world, but authorities are often reluctant to intervene. Erdogan and the AKP dissuade women from divorcing their husbands by creating legal and financial difficulties during and after the divorce process.

PRACTICES IN...

Practices in _____
(country name)

What are some democratic practices of this country?	What are some authoritarian practices of this country?
How would you describe this country? *(circle one)* *Democratic* *Mixed* *Authoritarian* Why? Please explain using examples from the text.	
Do you notice any similarities between this country and your own? If yes, please explain. If not, what are the major differences? Be specific.	
When it comes to human rights, is this country supportive or restrictive? Include an example from the text. *Refer to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights for examples of specific human rights.*	

LESSON 4: DO NOT OBEY IN ADVANCE

STAND AGAINST THE CURRENT

> Do not obey in advance. Most of the power of authoritarianism is freely given. In times like these, individuals think ahead about what a more repressive government will want, and then offer themselves without being asked. A citizen who adapts in this way is teaching power what it can do."
>
> *On Tyranny,* Chapter 1 (p. 17)

OVERVIEW

Content Level	Ages 14-18 (Grades 9-12)
Time	50 Minutes

Description	This lesson is designed to fit into one class period. Teachers should make adjustments as needed to meet the needs of their students. The lesson includes:
	• 2 Activities
	  • Think-Pair-Share activity in which students analyze a case study related to anticipatory obedience
	  • Individual reading of a historical case study, followed by small group discussion
	• Exit Card Prompts

Guiding Questions	• What is anticipatory obedience? In what ways is anticipatory obedience a problem? For whom? • How did the women of the Rosenstrasse protest defy the laws of Nazi Germany? What lessons can we learn from this example?
Learning Objectives	At the end of this lesson, students will be able to: • Explain the concept of anticipatory obedience. • Reflect on their personal experience when making a decision to stand against the current. • Assess the positive and negative consequences of resistance in a historical context.
Materials	• **Google Slides deck** (optional) • Student Handout: **Rosenstrasse** (also available digitally via **Google Docs**) • Scenario (see p. **47**) • Index cards or small slips of paper
Common Core Standards *Learn more at **corestandards.org**.*	Reading: Informational Text • CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.1 Speaking & Listening • CCSS.ELA-Literacy.SL.1 History/Social Studies • CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.2
Social Justice Standards *These standards were created by Learning for Justice. Learn more at **bit.ly/LFJ-standards**.*	Diversity • DI.9-12.6 • DI.9-12.9 Justice • JU.9-12.12 • JU.9-12.13

INTRODUCTION

In his book *On Tyranny: Twenty Lessons from the Twentieth Century*, Historian and Yale University Professor Timothy Snyder offers practical actions that individuals can take to help stop the spread of authoritarianism. The book's first point, "Do not obey in advance," advises against anticipatory obedience–"adapting instinctively, without reflection, to a new situation." This lesson applies not only to authoritarian regimes; it is also applicable to students' everyday lives. By examining anticipatory obedience in the context of both school and world history, students can better prepare themselves to make decisions to go with the flow or to stand against the current during extraordinary political times.

"Do not obey in advance" is Chapter 1 in *On Tyranny*, pages 17-21.

FOCUS ON HUMAN RIGHTS

Woven Teaching believes that **human rights education** is essential for students to understand and assert their own rights and to protect the rights of others. As a result, the **Universal Declaration of Human Rights** (UDHR) lies at the core of Woven Teaching's materials. The document's 30 articles outline fundamental human rights: basic rights and freedoms which every human being is entitled to, regardless of race, religion, birthplace, gender, sexual orientation, or other characteristics. Although its articles are not legally binding, the UDHR serves as a moral compass for the international community.

The activities in this lesson connect directly to several UDHR articles, including:

- **Article 3**: Right to life, freedom, and safety.
- **Article 9**: Right to be free from arbitrary arrest, detention, and exile.
- **Article 20**: Right to participate in and organize peaceful protests and meetings.
- **Article 29**: Right to be supported by your community and a duty to do the same.

ACTIVITIES

1 WHAT IS ANTICIPATORY OBEDIENCE? *15 MINUTES*

Students will learn the meaning of anticipatory obedience by analyzing a school-based scenario.

Materials

- **Google Slides deck** (optional)

Procedure

1. Explain that today's lesson is about both a common feature of authoritarian regimes and resistance.

2. Briefly elicit ideas about the meaning of the words *anticipatory* (or *anticipation*) and *obedience*, then ask students what they think the term *anticipatory obedience* might mean. Validate their responses and explain that they will read a scenario illustrating anticipatory obedience.

3. Ask for student volunteers to read the scenario on the following page aloud.

4. When finished, instruct students to discuss a few of the following questions with a partner:
   - What are the basic facts from the case study? Summarize.
   - What could Zanaida have done in this situation? Should she have pushed harder to get her story published? Why or why not?
   - What are other examples of anticipatory obedience that a young person might face?
     Possible responses: Doing chores at home, not misbehaving in class, going along with "trends" even if they don't agree with them, etc.

- Human societies are built on our need to connect with other people and to feel like we "fit in." One of the potentially negative outcomes of this is that it can lead to "groupthink" or conformity. People often feel that they have to hide or even change their ideas or beliefs to conform to the rest of their group in order to fit in. How does this show up in your school? In your society?

5. Bring students together and debrief as a class, asking students to share what they discussed with their partner. Tell students that the end of the scenario describes *anticipatory obedience*–thinking about what an authority figure will want, and then doing that thing without being asked to do it. Anticipatory obedience is important to the functioning of authoritarian regimes; it tells the government that people are willing to go along with their plans, and tells them that even more repressive measures are possible.

Scenario – School Newspaper

Zanaida is a student journalist writing for her school's newspaper. Recently, she has read many stories in the news about immigration in the US. Zanaida thinks that students at school would enjoy reading about it, too. She spends all week researching and writing a story about immigration and turns it into the paper's editor, Marisol. Zanaida feels confident because she spent a great deal of time trying to write about immigration as objectively as possible, using multiple sources, perspectives, and voices.

After reading Zanaida's article, Marisol tells her that they will not include it in the paper. "It's a really good story," they say, "and it's really well written, but I'm worried it is too controversial and the principal won't like it, so I'm not going to run it. I am sorry that you wasted your time."

Zanaida questions the decision and asks for an explanation. Marisol reminds her that their school's principal has a reputation for being unwilling to tackle tough conversations and subjects at school. The principal has said many times that she does not want students to "get political." Marisol is afraid the principal will get mad about the story on immigration and potentially shut the whole paper down. Marisol apologizes but explains that they would rather not risk this.

Feeling defeated, Zanaida decides that she won't write articles on controversial issues anymore. "There's no point in writing it if they won't publish it," she thinks. "If I'm the only person that wants to publish articles like this, I might as well just do what they want me to do and avoid getting in trouble."

2 THE ROSENSTRASSE PROTEST *30 MINUTES*

Students will work in small groups to analyze a historical protest under an authoritarian regime.

Materials

- **Google Slides deck** (optional)
- Student Handout: **Rosenstrasse**

Procedure

1. Ask for a volunteer to read the following excerpt from Timothy Snyder's *On Tyranny*:

   "Do not obey in advance. Most of the power of authoritarianism is freely given. In times like these, individuals think ahead about what a more repressive government will want, and then offer themselves without being asked. A citizen who adapts in this way is teaching power what it can do" (17).

2. Check for understanding by asking a few students to rephase the excerpt. *What does Snyder mean when he says, "A citizen who adapts in this way is teaching power what it can do"?*

3. Divide students into small groups and distribute one **Rosenstrasse** handout to each student. Instruct students to read the handout carefully, underlining any details they find interesting and circling anything they have questions about.

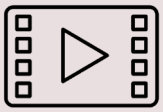
4. After everyone has finished reading, students will take turns sharing what they found interesting and what questions they have. Students will then discuss the following questions in their small group:
    - What were the potential positive and negative consequences that the women who participated in the Rosenstrasse demonstration may have considered before visibly protesting?
      Possible responses: Positive – keeping their husbands and children safe, sparking a wider protest movement against the Nazi government; negative – having their husbands and children harmed in retaliation for their protest; being arrested or killed by the government
    - Why do you think the Nazi government released the detainees? Why didn't they arrest or kill the women?
      Possible responses: The Nazi government didn't want the protests to spread, they didn't want to be seen harming "Aryan" women

    Move around the room, checking in with groups and answering questions as needed.

5. After 15 minutes, debrief as a class. Ask students to share what their groups discussed and answer any questions they might have.

6. Close the activity by asking a few students to share their thoughts on the following questions:
    - By protesting publicly, the women of Rosenstrasse risked their lives. Do you think there were other ways that they might have achieved the same results without putting themselves in danger? If so, what were they?
    - The Rosenstrasse protest is notable because the Nazi government faced little resistance from its non-Jewish citizens. What were some ways that people could have resisted the Nazis or not practiced anticipatory obedience?

TIMOTHY SNYDER SPEAKS: *ON TYRANNY*



Timothy Snyder's **YouTube channel** includes a **video** (7:40) on this and each of the other 19 points in *On Tyranny*. If you have time to do so, you may wish to include this video in the lesson with the following discussion questions:

- Snyder says the choice to go with the new flow or stand against the current is the "choice of all choices." Think about a time when you have had to choose to either go along with what others were doing or do something different. How did that decision make you feel? What factors did you consider?
- Do you agree with Snyder that the longer things go on, the harder it is to take action? Why or why not?

*Technology-free classroom? A transcript for this video is available via **Google Docs**.*

3 CLOSING: EXIT CARD *5 MINUTES*

Students will complete an exit card, reflecting on actions that they can take to safeguard democracy.

Materials

- **Google Slides deck** (optional)
- Index cards or small slips of paper

Procedure

1. Before distributing the "exit cards" (index cards), remind students that some forms of resistance are very large and visible (like the Rosenstrasse demonstration) and others are very small. All forms of resistance can contribute to safeguarding democracy.

2. Provide each student with an index card and ask them to respond to at least two of the following questions:
    - How does the history of the Rosenstrasse protest connect to the case study about the school newspaper? Are there elements of the situations that were similar?
    - What are some questions you could ask yourself when deciding whether or not to obey authority?
    - Other than a protest, what is a specific example of a "big" way that someone can resist oppression?
    - What is a specific example of a "small" way that someone can resist oppression?
    - What questions do you have from today's lesson?

3. You may wish to begin the next class session by reading some of the student responses (anonymously) or by answering questions they shared.

RESOURCES

Woven Teaching

Human Rights Education
woventeaching.org/human-rights-education

Learn more about Human Rights Education, a pedagogy rooted in advancing human rights through teaching that promotes cooperation, respect, and the dignity of all people.

Universal Declaration of Human Rights
woventeaching.org/udhr

From this page, students can access information about the history of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, as well as full text and student versions of the document.

Timothy Snyder

On Tyranny: Twenty Lessons from the Twentieth Century
New York: Tim Duggan Books, 2017

The framework created by Professor Timothy Snyder in *On Tyranny: Twenty Lessons from the Twentieth Century* provides the basis for the *Defending Democracy* curriculum.

Lesson 1: Do Not Obey in Advance
youtu.be/9tocssf3w80

In 2021, Timothy Snyder created a series of videos about *On Tyranny*, providing an updated perspective on the book's lessons.

Activities

The Rosenstrasse Demonstration, 1943
USHMM Holocaust Encyclopedia
encyclopedia.ushmm.org/content/en/article/the-rosenstrasse-demonstration-1943

The United States Holocaust Memorial Museum's Holocaust Encyclopedia offers a wealth of information for students interested in learning more about the Holocaust and Nazi Germany, including the Rosenstrasse protest.

HANDOUT ROSENSTRASSE PROTEST

Anticipatory obedience occurs when a person is eager to please an authority figure. They do things that they think the authority would want without being asked to do so. Often, it means that a person is willing to compromise a value or principle in order to appease authority. In the context of an authoritarian government, the implications of anticipatory obedience can be very serious.

This is what happened in Germany during the Nazi era. From the beginning of the Nazi regime, Adolf Hitler and the Nazi government made it clear that Jewish people were not welcome in Germany and violence against Jews was both accepted and encouraged. In many cases, regular Germans took it upon themselves to harass or harm their Jewish neighbors without being asked to do so.

But not everyone participated. Some German people refused to participate in verbal and physical threats against Jewish people. Others went further–they decided that they had to take action against the regime to protect Jews and others.

In October 1941, the Nazi government began deporting Jewish people from Berlin to ghettos and killing centers in Eastern Europe. For the most part, the Nazis were able to carry out these deportations with little resistance from non-Jewish Germans. This is partially because the Nazis were not transparent about their actions; they were secretive about where they were taking Jewish people and what they were doing to them. The lack of resistance was also due to the fact that the Nazi government was very powerful, and anyone who did not obey put themselves at risk of arrest or death.

As the Nazi government deported more and more Jewish people from German cities and towns, they were concerned with resistance they might encounter from non-Jewish Germans who were married to Jews. For this reason, the Nazi leadership decided that Jews in “mixed marriages” and their children would not be killed until after Germany won the war. They did not want potential unrest from the non-Jewish relatives of deportees to spread to the wider population.

By 1943, there were approximately 8,800 intermarried Jews and their children remaining in Berlin. When the Nazis arrested 2,000 people (mostly men) from this group in late February 1943, the move sparked the first and only mass demonstration to protect Jewish people in the history of Nazi Germany.

When news of the arrests spread, the men’s spouses and other relatives gathered outside of the building where the men were being detained–a building on a street called Rosenstrasse (pronounced *roh-zen-shtraw-suh*) in Berlin. Over the next week, hundreds of people joined the protest outside of the building on Rosenstrasse. Officials at the building threatened to shoot the protesters, but most of the women remained. By March 6, most of the detainees were released. The public protest was successful. The authorities backed down in fear of larger and more visible protests.

Like the women at Rosenstrasse, everyday, people around the world decide that they have had enough. They reach a point where they decide that what is being asked of them is too much, and they take action. They decide that they are unwilling to support (or ignore) the harm

caused by an oppressive regime. These actions look different depending on the person and the situation.

Whether against a government or any position of authority, sometimes people resist in ways that are visible: they protest, strike, call their elected representatives, etc. Many other times, people resist in less visible ways: having a conversation with a loved one, not repeating a slogan or talking point, or quietly donating to organizations doing good work that they support, for example.

Whether highly visible or not, resisting authoritarianism is not easy. And the longer that a person or society goes with the flow, the harder it can be to make change. It takes a lot of courage to take any action against authority, but it can make a huge difference. In some cases, like in the case of the Rosenstrasse demonstration, it can save lives.

Notes

LESSON 5: MAKE EYE CONTACT AND SMALL TALK

BUILD SOCIAL CONNECTION

> Make eye contact and small talk. This is not just polite. It is part of being a citizen and a responsible member of society. It is also a way to stay in touch with your surroundings, break down social barriers, and understand whom you should and should not trust."
>
> *On Tyranny,* Chapter 12 (p. 81)

OVERVIEW

Content Level	Ages 14-18 (Grades 9-12)
Time	50 Minutes

Description	This lesson is designed to fit into one class period. Teachers should make adjustments as needed to meet the needs of their students. The lesson includes:
	• 4 Activities
	  • All-class game to practice making eye contact
	  • Individual writing activity for students to consider the importance of social connection in protecting democracy
	  • All-class activity to create a found poem about social engagement
	  • Abstract contour drawing in pairs to further build connection
	• Reflection Prompts
	• 1 Extension Activity
	• 1 Optional Assessment

Guiding Questions	• How do small, everyday actions like making eye contact and small talk contribute to safeguarding democracy and fighting authoritarianism? • How does social connection help to protect democracy? • What actions can young people take to defend democracy?
Learning Objectives	At the end of this lesson, students will be able to: • Remember and practice strategies and techniques for making eye contact and small talk to connect socially with community members. • Understand the importance of community engagement in safeguarding democracy.
Materials	• **Google Slides deck** (optional) • Notebooks/journals • Pens/markers • Sheets of drawing paper (any size)
Common Core Standards *Learn more at **corestandards.org**.*	Speaking & Listening • CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.1 • CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.4 Writing • CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.10
Social Justice Standards *These standards were created by Learning for Justice. Learn more at **bit.ly/LFJ-standards**.*	Diversity • DI.9-12.6 • DI.9-12.9 Action • AC.9-12.17 • AC.9-12.20

INTRODUCTION

In his book *On Tyranny: Twenty Lessons from the Twentieth Century*, Historian and Yale University Professor Timothy Snyder offers practical actions that individuals can take to help stop the spread of authoritarianism. One of the book's lessons, "Make eye contact and small talk," encourages individuals to connect with those around them. Snyder suggests that authoritarian leaders often rely on social disconnection to enact their agendas, and that small social gestures can interrupt an authoritarian culture of silence and secrecy. This lesson invites students to connect with their peers through the practice of making eye contact and small talk. It also gives students the opportunity to express their creativity through abstract contour drawing.

"Make eye contact and small talk" is Chapter 12 in *On Tyranny*, pages 81-82.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

This lesson was written by Mariah Rankine-Landers with support from Woven Teaching. We are very grateful for her contributions to *Defending Democracy*. For more information about Mariah, see Appendix, p. **213**.

FOCUS ON HUMAN RIGHTS

Woven Teaching believes that **human rights education** is essential for students to understand and assert their own rights and to protect the rights of others. As a result, the **Universal Declaration of Human Rights** (UDHR) lies at the core of Woven Teaching's materials. The document's 30 articles outline fundamental human rights: basic rights and freedoms which every human being is entitled to, regardless of race, religion, birthplace, gender, sexual orientation, or other characteristics. Although its articles are not legally binding, the UDHR serves as a moral compass for the international community.

The activities in this lesson connect directly to several UDHR articles, including:

- **Article 1**: Right to equality, dignity, and respect.
- **Article 27**: Right to participate in cultural, artistic, and scientific life.
- **Article 29**: Right to be supported by your community and a duty to do the same.

ACTIVITIES

1 ESTABLISHING CONNECTION *5 MINUTES*

Students will practice making eye contact with their peers through a short classroom game.

Materials

- **Google Slides deck** (optional)
- Timer

Procedure

1. Preparation: Set up your classroom so that students are seated in a circle or can otherwise see multiple peers.

2. Explain that today's lesson will have students practice making eye contact in brief stints. Acknowledge that this might feel vulnerable for those unaccustomed to it. If students show signs of discomfort, reassure them that it's okay to feel uneasy. It may be reassuring to students to know that the activity will only last 5 minutes.

   Note: In many cultures, making eye contact is considered disrespectful or taboo. Additionally, neurodiverse students may have trouble making or maintaining eye contact. Allow students to choose their level of

participation. They can either look directly at their peer, look at the top of their head or forehead, call out their name to confirm the connection, or use a shared hand signal or gesture to confirm the pairing.

3. Once students are in a circle or seated where they can see multiple peers, start a timer for 5 minutes. Have all students look down at their feet, then count to three and then say, "Look Up!" Each student must make eye contact with someone else in the room or hold the presence of a peer by looking in their direction. Confirm this by nodding, stating the peer's name or using a shared hand gesture or sign language to communicate.

   If a student cannot find someone's eye, they should keep looking until they do.

4. Students should maintain eye contact until everyone is paired up. If there is an odd number of students, the student without a partner becomes the new narrator and leads the next round. If there is an even number, you can remain the narrator.

5. Continue the game for several rounds to ensure everyone gets comfortable with making eye contact. After the final round, inform students that the person they just connected with will be their partner for the next portion of the lesson. Allow a moment for them to sit next to their partner.

6. Explain that they just participated in supporting democracy. Social connection, including small actions such as making eye contact, small talk, and presence holding are critical for building and sustaining community and democracy. If time permits, debrief with any of the following strategies:
   - Discuss the game with the students. Be ready for mixed reactions, including anxiety or laughter, which are typical.
   - Have students share what made them feel the way they did during the game.
   - Praise their participation and exploration of making eye contact or holding the presence of someone.

TEACHING ALTERNATIVE

Have more time or want students to get a little bit more practice with eye contact? Try the following variation of the above activity:

1. Arrange students in two circles: an inner circle and an outer circle. The inner circle should face the outer circle so that each student is paired with a partner.

2. Have students practice making eye contact with each partner they interact with, both while talking and listening. Remind them that maintaining eye contact might feel uncomfortable, but encourage them to keep eye contact as long as they can bear it.

   - **Round 1:** Students silently look at their partner for 10 seconds.
   - **Round 2:** The inner circle steps to the right to form new partnerships. Students silently hold eye contact with their new partner for 15 seconds.
   - **Round 3:** The inner circle steps to the right again. Students silently hold eye contact with their new partner for 20 seconds.
   - **Round 4:** The inner circle steps to the right. Students introduce themselves by sharing their name and their favorite piece of random information.
   - **Round 5:** The inner circle steps to the right. Students answer the question: "What are you feeling most proud of right now?"
   - **Round 6:** The inner circle steps to the right. Students answer the question: "What story have you been into (a book, series, news story, etc.)?"
   - **Round 7:** The inner circle steps to the right. Students give a food recommendation to their partner.
   - **Round 8:** The inner circle steps to the right. Students name their favorite place to go in their town, city, or state/province/region.
   - **Round 9:** The inner circle steps to the right. Students silently hold eye contact with their new partner for 20 seconds.

- **Round 10:** The inner circle steps to the right. Students silently hold eye contact with their new partner for 15 seconds.
- **Round 11:** The inner circle steps to the right. Students silently look at their partner for 10 seconds.

3. Release the circle by having students shake off the energy and intensity of the activity.

2 MAKE EYE CONTACT AND SMALL TALK *10 MINUTES*

Students will work in small groups to analyze a historical protest under an authoritarian regime.

Materials

- **Google Slides deck** (optional)
- Notebooks/journals

Procedure

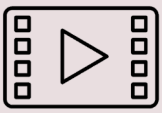
1. Read the lesson's guiding questions aloud to the students (see p. **53**).

2. Introduce students to Chapter 12 of *On Tyranny* by reading the following passage aloud:

   "Make eye contact and small talk. This is not just polite. It is part of being a citizen and a responsible member of society. It is also a way to stay in touch with your surroundings, break down social barriers, and understand whom you should and should not trust" (81).

3. Ask students to spend a few minutes reflecting on this quote in their notebooks. Some potential questions for reflection include:
   - Do you make eye contact and small talk? With who? Why or why not?
   - How might eye contact and small talk help to protect democracy and/or human rights?
   - What are some other benefits of brief social connections?

TIMOTHY SNYDER SPEAKS: *ON TYRANNY*



Timothy Snyder's **YouTube channel** includes a **video** (6:11) on this and each of the other 19 points in *On Tyranny*. If you have time to do so, you may wish to include this video in the lesson with the following discussion questions:

- What are some ways that maintaining social contact with your neighbors helps to keep you safe (either in a democracy or under authoritarianism)?
- Snyder says, "if someone has some reason to feel [...] they're being left out, they're being pushed aside, small gestures can make a big difference." Can you think of a time when a small gesture made you feel included?
- How do small gestures contribute to a culture of democracy and human rights?

Technology-free classroom? A transcript for this video is available via **Google Docs**.

3 SOCIAL ENGAGEMENT IS... *10 MINUTES*

Students will learn about author and activist Mia Birdsong and create a communal found poem.

Materials

- **Google Slides deck** (optional)
- Poster paper

Procedure

1. Explain that you will share information about social engagement. Read the following passage, asking students to write down at least 3 key words that stick out to them as you read:

   Social engagement is essential to counteract authoritarian tendencies. When we build community and feel connected to others, we create trust. Trust leads to peace of mind, which fosters a sense of well-being. This well-being promotes good mental, physical, and spiritual health. Being part of a community allows for mutual care and support, leading to interdependence. Interdependence, like in ecosystems such as the rainforest, is vital for survival.

   To support the discussion on how social engagement can counteract authoritarian tendencies, consider the insights from Mia Birdsong's work. In her book How We Show Up: Reclaiming Family, Friendship, and Community*, Birdsong emphasizes the importance of interdependence and belonging. She states that "what separates us isn't only the ever-present injustices built around race, class, gender, values, and beliefs, but also the denial of our interdependence and need for belonging."[1] This highlights how essential community and social connections are in creating trust and fostering well-being, which are critical in resisting authoritarianism.*

   Birdsong also underscores that true freedom is found in practicing connection, mutuality, and care within communities. She explains that by returning to our inherent connectedness, we can find strength, safety, and support in vulnerability and generosity. This collective approach not only nurtures individual well-being but also strengthens the community's resilience against authoritarian practices.[2]

2. Have students select 1-2 of the words they wrote down to share publicly. Move around the classroom, quickly jotting down one response from each student on the board or a large piece of poster paper.

3. When you are done compiling their responses, give it a title. "Social Engagement is.."

4. Explain to students that they just created a communal found poem.

   Note: It is okay if students offer the same response repeatedly. It will add to the impact of the shared poem.

[1] "'How We Show Up' Book Talk with Mia Birdsong," Aspen Institute, 28 July 2020, **https://www.aspeninstitute.org/videos/how-we-show-up-book-talk-with-mia-birdsong**.
[2] "Mia Birdsong on Freedom, Equity, and Interdependence," Deem, **https://www.deemjournal.com/stories/mia-birdsong**.

4 BUILDING CONNECTION *20 MINUTES*

Students will create abstract contour drawings as a way to build community. This activity supports connection through awkward laughter that increases oxytocin in the brain (a hormone involved in social bonding) and fosters a sense of collective experience, increasing community connectedness.

Materials

- **Google Slides deck** (optional)
- Pens/markers
- Sheets of drawing paper

Procedure

Note: Before beginning, consider whether this activity is safe for all students in your classroom. Because students will draw each other (even though abstract), this activity has the potential to be emotionally risky and could lead to students drawing peers in an unkind, biased, or stereotypical way.

1. Preparation: Abstract contour drawing is a type of drawing that uses a line to capture the shape and form of a subject in an abstract way. If you are not familiar with the process of abstract contour drawing, watch one (or both) of the tutorials listed in the lesson's Resources (see p. **61**). Abstract Contour Drawing can feel intimidating for those with little drawing experience. However, it is a simple method that doesn't require perfect lines and is intended to look messy.

2. Pair students with their same partners from the start of the lesson and have them sit facing each other. Explain that students will create a piece of contemporary art with their partner as the subject.

3. Introduce Abstract Contour Drawing: This method involves looking at your partner while drawing, without looking at your paper. The goal is to draw the person in front of you in one continuous line without lifting your pen from the paper, capturing as many details as possible.

   To ease any tension, remind students that abstract drawing is not about perfection!

4. Share the following instructions with students:
   a. Start at the top of the head and draw the outline of the face.
   b. Keep your pen on the paper and move to capture the lines and shapes of the eyes, nose, mouth, glasses (if applicable), eyebrows, eyelashes, cheeks, ears, hair, and neck.
   c. Overlapping lines and shapes are expected as you draw continuously without lifting the pen.

5. Instruct students to begin by hello to their partner. If they do not know each other, have them introduce themselves, sharing their name, favorite snack, and favorite time of day (and why). After they've broken the ice, ask students to begin the abstract drawing of their partner.

6. Once the drawings are complete, students should share their artwork with their partner. Laughter and amusement are likely as they reveal their abstract renditions. Emphasize that the artwork is meant to be an abstract interpretation, not an exact likeness.

7. Ask students to spend a few minutes practicing small talk with their partner. Provide a few starter questions and encourage natural conversation. Remind students to practice making eye contact or maintaining the presence of the person in front of them by looking in their general direction, nodding to show they are listening, or using a hand signal or gesture to communicate.

   Starter Questions:

   - What is one thing you care deeply about? (Friends, family, pets, soccer, etc.)
   - What is something you've been wanting to experience? (A certain type of food, a trip somewhere, etc.)

TEACHING TIP The sign for "yes" is a good sign to show that listening is happening if a student has an adverse reaction to making eye contact for cultural, neurodivergent, or other reasons. To do this, make a fist and move it up and down (in the way that you would nod your head up and down). See **Sign Language Tutorial** for more details.

8. After a few minutes, bring the class together. Close by sharing that social connection like this helps to create inclusive communities that look out for each other. While actions like making eye contact and small talk may seem small, they help to foster a sense of belonging and trust. These actions are important in democratic societies, and are important to maintain when facing authoritarian regimes.

5 CLOSING: REFLECTION *5 MINUTES*

Students will offer a two-word reflection on the importance of social connection for the protection of democracy.

Materials

- **Google Slides deck** (optional)
- Poster paper (optional)

Procedure

1. Reread the quote from *On Tyranny* on p. **56**.

2. Have students offer a two-word reflection that responds to one of the lesson guiding questions:
    - How do small, everyday actions like making eye contact and small talk, contribute to safeguarding democracy and fighting authoritarianism?
    - How does social connection help to protect democracy?
    - What actions can young people take to defend democracy?

3. Record student responses on the board or poster paper to build another poem and/or acknowledge students' powerful thinking and practice during the lesson.

ADDITIONAL MATERIALS

EXTENSION ACTIVITY: COMMUNITY ART

Students will create work inspired by visual artist and activist Favianna Rodriguez.

Materials

- Images of Favianna Rodriguez's work
- Poster paper
- Brightly colored pens/markers
- Pre-cut shapes or die-cut

Procedure

1. Preparation: Choose some images from **favianna.com** to share with students, printing them as handouts or putting them into a slide deck.

2. Begin by introducing students to the work of Favianna Rodriguez, an artist based in Oakland, California who is known for her vibrant art that advocates for social justice, democracy, and community engagement.

3. Ask students to brainstorm small, everyday actions that contribute to safeguarding democracy. Encourage them to think about actions inspired by Favianna Rodriguez's art and activism, such as promoting inclusivity, supporting local initiatives, and engaging in peaceful protests.

4. Using Favianna Rodriguez's style as inspiration, instruct students to create posters featuring their brainstormed actions. Ensure they use bold colors, strong messages, and imagery that reflects the spirit of community and democracy.
    - Provide materials such as posters, markers, and art supplies.
    - Encourage creativity and collaboration, allowing students to work in pairs or small groups.

5. Display the finished posters in the classroom and around the school to promote awareness and inspire others to take part in safeguarding democracy.

    Note: You may wish to organize a mini-exhibition where students can present their posters and explain the actions they have illustrated. This allows students to practice making eye contact and small talk, similar to the techniques discussed earlier in the lesson.

OPTIONAL ASSESSMENT: REFLECTIVE JOURNAL ENTRY

Assess students' understanding of the importance of eye contact, small talk, and community engagement in safeguarding democracy.

Materials

- Notebooks/journals

Procedure

After the "Practicing Small Talk" activity, ask students to write a short reflective journal entry in their notebooks. They should respond to the following prompts:

- How did making eye contact and engaging in small talk with your partner make you feel?
- During the eye contact or small talk activities, what challenges did you experience and how did you overcome them?
- How can small, everyday actions like making eye contact and engaging in conversations contribute to defending democracy?
- What other actions can you and your peers take to defend democracy?

Assessment Criteria

- Understanding of concepts: Does the student grasp the connection between social engagement and democratic practices?
- Personal reflection: Does the student thoughtfully reflect on their personal experience during the activity?
- Critical thinking: Does the student make connections between the lesson's activities and broader democratic principles?

RESOURCES

Woven Teaching

Human Rights Education
woventeaching.org/human-rights-education

Learn more about Human Rights Education, a pedagogy rooted in advancing human rights through teaching that promotes cooperation, respect, and the dignity of all people.

Universal Declaration of Human Rights
woventeaching.org/udhr

From this page, students can access information about the history of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, as well as full text and student versions of the document.

Timothy Snyder

On Tyranny: Twenty Lessons from the Twentieth Century
New York: Tim Duggan Books, 2017

The framework created by Professor Timothy Snyder in *On Tyranny: Twenty Lessons from the Twentieth Century* provides the basis for the *Defending Democracy* curriculum.

Lesson 12: Make Eye Contact and Small Talk
youtu.be/j2Ol6ZVDQPU

In 2021, Timothy Snyder created a series of videos about *On Tyranny*, providing an updated perspective on the book's lessons.

Activities

All the Lonely People: Why Americans' Isolation Is a Threat to Our Democracy
Einhorn Collective (Jonathan Gruber, 22 September 2022)
einhorncollaborative.org/why-americans-isolation-is-a-threat-to-our-democracy

This short article outlines a few reasons why social connection can contribute to protecting democracy.

Tutorials on Abstract Contour Drawing

- OnlineDrawingLessons (2:54): **youtu.be/FKHVqbM_xLU**
- Sketching Scottie (7:01): **youtu.be/WxXBHG90CRE**

LESSON 6: BE KIND TO OUR LANGUAGE

EXPAND YOUR WORLDVIEW

> Be kind to our language. Avoid pronouncing the phrases everyone else does. Think up your own way of speaking, even if only to convey that thing you think everyone is saying. Make an effort to separate yourself from the internet. Read books."
>
> *On Tyranny,* Chapter 9 (p. 59)

OVERVIEW

Content Level	Ages 14-18 (Grades 9-12)
Time	50 Minutes

Description	This lesson is designed to fit into one class period. Teachers should make adjustments as needed to meet the needs of their students. The lesson includes:
	• 2 Activities
	  • All-class video review and discussion on social media algorithms and how they can contribute to limiting our worldview
	  • Gallery walk in which students will reflect on quotes by famous authors and consider how reading contributes to personal and societal freedom
	• Instructions for a longer term project to encourage the development of reading habits

Guiding Questions	• Why does social media heighten our emotions? • How do social media algorithms work? • How can reading support democracy?
Learning Objectives	At the end of this lesson, students will be able to: • Describe the use of algorithms by social media companies. • Recognize the importance of reading as a safeguard against authoritarianism. • Develop a reading habit.

Materials	• **Google Slides deck** (optional)
	• Reading Quotes (see p. **69**)
	• Student Handouts (also available digitally via **Google Docs**)
	  • **Social Media Algorithms**
	  • **Project: Build a Reading Habit**
	• Video: "**How TikTok's Algorithm Figures You Out**" (13:02, Wall Street Journal)
	• Art supplies
	• Notebooks/journals
	• Pens/markers
	• Poster paper

Common Core Standards *Learn more at **corestandards.org**.*	Reading • CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.R.1 • CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.R.2 Speaking & Listening • CCSS.ELA-Literacy.SL.1
Social Justice Standards *These standards were created by Learning for Justice. Learn more at **bit.ly/LFJ-standards**.*	Diversity • DI.9-12.6 • DI.9-12.8 • DI.9-12.9 Action • AC.9-12.20

INTRODUCTION

In his book *On Tyranny: Twenty Lessons from the Twentieth Century*, Historian and Yale University Professor Timothy Snyder offers practical actions that individuals can take to help stop the spread of authoritarianism. One of the book's lessons, "Be kind to our language," encourages students to expand their worldviews by spending time away from the internet. By reading, students can deepen their understanding of the world around them and develop their own opinions, rather than simply repeating what they have read online.

This lesson asks students to consider the content they view on social media and to reflect on the role of algorithms in potentially limiting the perspectives available to us. It also provides students the opportunity to build a reading habit.

"Be kind to our language" is Chapter 9 in *On Tyranny*, pages 59-64.

FOCUS ON HUMAN RIGHTS

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The activities in this lesson connect directly to several UDHR articles, including:

- **Article 12**: Right to privacy.
- **Article 19**: Right to freedom of opinion and expression.
- **Article 26**: Right to education.

ACTIVITIES

1 NAVIGATING SOCIAL MEDIA *20 MINUTES*

Students will reflect on the content they engage with on social media and consider how algorithms can contribute to limiting their worldview.

Materials

- **Google Slides deck** (optional)
- Video: "**How TikTok's Algorithm Figures You Out**" (13:02, Wall Street Journal)
- Student Handout: Social Media Algorithms (**Handout A**)

Procedure

1. Begin by asking students to spend 1 minute thinking about the following prompt:

   Think about the last time you felt heightened emotions (happy, sad, angry, etc.) when looking at social media. What was the emotion? What was the image or text that brought up this emotion?

   If students do not use social media, they can answer the same question about YouTube, TV news, or other forms of media.

2. Instruct students to find a nearby partner and spend 1 minute describing:
   - The post that caused this reaction
   - How often they see content like this on their social media
   - How often social media heightens their emotions (positively or negatively)

Note: Some students may have seen disturbing or offensive content on social media. Remind students to be respectful and conscientious when describing these posts to their classmates.

3. After each student has shared, bring the class together. Ask: *Why do you think we feel these heightened emotions while using social media?*

4. Share that these emotional reactions are by design; they are what social media companies want. Social media algorithms are designed to feed us content that will keep our eyes on the screen–not content that is necessarily helpful or informative. Algorithms put content in our feed that we will react to. They also feed us increasingly specific (and in some cases, radical or extreme) content, limiting our exposure to content from people with different views.

5. Explain that now you will watch a video that explains how social media algorithms work and why social media networks seem to know a person's interests, thoughts, and feelings.

6. Distribute one copy of the Social Media Algorithms worksheet (**Handout A**) to each student. Before watching the video, instruct them to answer the first question:
   - #1: What kind of content do you see most often on your social media accounts?

   After 1-2 minutes, ask a few volunteers to share their answers.

7. Introduce the video by reminding students that algorithms choose the types of content we see on social media. If the content more closely aligns with our interests or heightens our emotions, we are more likely to spend more time on the platform (and will therefore generate more income for social media companies through advertising and the sale of data about us).

8. To understand how this happens, watch "**How TikTok's Algorithm Figures You Out**" (13:02), pausing at the following points to allow students to complete the handout.

   *Note: Technology-free classroom? A transcript for this video is available via **Google Docs**.*

   0:00-3:42
   - #2: What are the benefits of social media platforms serving you content that they know you will engage with or react to?
     Possible responses: Learning more about topics of interest; community building
   - #3: What are the drawbacks of social media platforms not serving you other content that isn't curated for you specifically?
     Possible responses: Limits content from outside your bubble; doesn't allow you to learn from other perspectives

   3:43-7:21
   - #4: Even without listening to your microphone or reading your messages, TikTok (and other platforms) have a lot of information about you and your interests. Do you feel comfortable with this? Why or why not?

   7:22-9:30
   - #5: After only 36 minutes of total watch time, almost all of the bot's videos were about mental health and depression; most of the other videos it saw were ads. How could limiting someone's feed like this be harmful to the social media user?
     Possible response: The user could only see more and more extreme content, causing negative mental or social effects.

TEACHING TIP

Short on time? Share the following video in place of the video above, then discuss as a class.

CBC Kids News. "Social media algorithms explained." YouTube. Video, 3:01. 24 September 2021. **https://youtu.be/F5tz887wXCY**. [**Transcript**]

9:31-12:54

- #6: How might algorithms like this be harmful to society as a whole? How might they support the growth of authoritarianism?
  Possible responses: It might limit the breadth of opinion that a person is exposed to; an authoritarian government could use data from social media to learn more about individuals

9. Debrief as a class, asking volunteers to share their responses.

10. Transition to the next activity by explaining that while social media and the internet do also have positive outcomes, it can be beneficial for us as individuals and as members of society to develop the habit of obtaining information offline.

2 READING IS POWER *25 MINUTES*

Students will participate in a gallery walk and consider the importance of reading.

Materials

- **Google Slides deck** (optional)
- Reading Quotes (see p. **69**)
- Pens/markers
- Poster paper
- Tape or glue

Procedure

1. Preparation: Print the Reading Quotes (see p. **69**) and tape each to a separate sheet of poster paper. Position the sheets at different spots around the room.

2. Introduce Timothy Snyder's idea of "be kind to our language" by sharing the following passage from *On Tyranny*:

   "Politicians in our times feed their clichés to television, where even those who wish to disagree repeat them. Television purports to challenge political language by conveying images, but the succession from one frame to another can hinder a sense of resolution. Everything happens fast, but nothing actually happens. Each story on televised news is "breaking" until it is displaced by the next one. So we are hit by wave upon wave but never see the ocean" (60).

3. Ask: *What is Snyder saying about how we process information in the digital age?* Elicit responses and explain that in this passage, Snyder is speaking about the effect of television, but the same goes for social media – we are constantly flooded with so many stories and crises that "need" our attention that we never have time to zoom out and look at the big picture. We need to see the big picture to figure out the significance of each event and how they link together. When we focus on the big picture, we are better positioned to recognize encroachments on our rights.

   In *On Tyranny*, Snyder suggests that one thing we can do to help our brains "see the ocean" is to read. By reading, we expand our vocabularies, our ideas, and our sense of what is possible. We also become less predictable.

4. Explain that students will now engage in a gallery walk. Before moving from their seats, ask for volunteers to read the quotes and associated questions aloud.

READING QUOTES

"We bombard people with sensation. That substitutes for thinking."[1]

– Ray Bradbury, author of *Fahrenheit 451*

Consider the previous activity about social media. Do you believe this quote captures your own experience with media (TV, social media, etc.)? Why or why not?

"Books are a form of political action. Books are knowledge. Books are reflection. Books change your mind."[2]

– Toni Morrison, author of *Beloved*

Share an example of a time that a book changed your mind or introduced you to a new idea or concept.

"We read books to find out who we are. What other people, real or imaginary, do and think and feel … is an essential guide to our understanding of what we ourselves are and may become."[3]

– Ursula K. Le Guin, author of *The Hand of Darkness*

How does reading books help us understand ourselves? How does it help us understand others?

"The pursuit of knowing was freedom to me, the right to declare your own curiosities and follow them through all manner of books. I was made for the library, not the classroom. The classroom was a jail of other people's interests. The library was open, unending, free."[4]

– Ta-Nehisi Coates, author of *Between the World and Me*

How does reading contribute to freedom? How does it contribute to upholding democracy?

5. Explain that each of these quotes has been placed at a different spot in the room, along with a corresponding question for reflection. Instruct students to move to the quote that they feel resonates most with them personally.

6. Give students 2 minutes to write a response to the question on the poster paper. Encourage them to include additional reflections or questions in their response.

7. After 2 minutes (or all students have finished), instruct students to move to a different quote. For this round, students should read the quote and the original question, but rather than responding to that material directly, they should instead respond to what a classmate wrote on the poster in the previous round. *Do their opinions differ? Does the student agree with their classmate and have something to add?*

8. Bring the class together and quickly debrief by reading each quote/question and some of the responses. Ask: *Do you agree that reading is important to protecting democracy? Why or why not?*

---

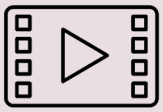
[1] Ray Bradbury, Fahrenheit 451: 50th Anniversary Edition (New York: Ballantine Books, 2003). This quote comes from an interview with the author in the book's appendix. This edition is no longer in print, but the interview is available at **https://theinferior4.livejournal.com/90384.html**.

[2] Paulette Beete, "For the Love of Reading!" National Endowment for the Arts, 4 September 2018, **https://www.arts.gov/stories/blog/2018/love-reading**.

[3] Alison Flood and Benjamin Lee, "Ursula K Le Guin, sci-fi and fantasy author, dies aged 88," The Guardian, 25 January 2018, **https://www.theguardian.com/books/2018/jan/23/ursula-k-le-guin-sci-fi-fantasy-author-dies-at-88**.

[4] Ta Nehisi-Coates, Between the World and Me (New York: Spiegel & Grau, 2015), 48.

TIMOTHY SNYDER SPEAKS: *ON TYRANNY*



Timothy Snyder's **YouTube channel** includes a **video** (7:03) on this and each of the other 19 points in *On Tyranny*. If you have time to do so, you may wish to include this video in the lesson with the following discussion questions:

- Snyder says that we cannot protect democracy if we are just "repeaters of algorithmically targeted memes." In addition to reading books, what can we do to inform ourselves about the world around us and develop our own opinions?
- How does being unpredictable help to stop authoritarianism?

*Technology-free classroom? A transcript for this video is available via **Google Docs**.*

3 PROJECT INTRODUCTION *5 MINUTES*

Students will participate in a gallery walk and consider the importance of reading.

Materials

- **Google Slides deck** (optional)
- Student Handout: Project: Build a Reading Habit (**Handout B**)
- Art supplies
- Notebooks/journals

Procedure

1. Read the following quote from Timothy Snyder:

   "Time on the internet [...] wears off your rough patches, makes you more like other people in the little group you've been categorized in. Reading makes you less predictable. Reading takes what you have and adds something to it in an unpredictable way."[5]

2. Distribute one copy of Project: Build a Reading Habit (**Handout B**) to each student and introduce the project. Explain that their homework assignment is to read a book of their choosing and complete a creative reflection project.

   Share that developing a reading habit is not about reading any particular kind of book; it's just about developing a habit that will allow your brain to process the world in a different, more expansive way. This helps to make you more unpredictable and better able to understand the world around you.

   Note: Allowing students to choose a book of any genre and topic may lead to the most enthusiasm for the project; however, you may wish to set parameters for the project if you would prefer reading to be done in support of previous or future lessons.

3. Students can share their projects at a future class session or digitally on Google Classroom (or a similar platform).

[5] Timothy Snyder, "Lesson 9: Be Kind To Our Language," YouTube, Video, 7:03, 6 November 2021, **https://youtu.be/xi-XQrdpG_o**.

RESOURCES

Woven Teaching

Human Rights Education
woventeaching.org/human-rights-education

Learn more about Human Rights Education, a pedagogy rooted in advancing human rights through teaching that promotes cooperation, respect, and the dignity of all people.

Universal Declaration of Human Rights
woventeaching.org/udhr

From this page, students can access information about the history of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, as well as full text and student versions of the document.

Timothy Snyder

On Tyranny: Twenty Lessons from the Twentieth Century
New York: Tim Duggan Books, 2017

The framework created by Professor Timothy Snyder in *On Tyranny: Twenty Lessons from the Twentieth Century* provides the basis for the *Defending Democracy* curriculum.

Lesson 9: Be Kind To Our Language
youtu.be/xi-XQrdpG_o

In 2021, Timothy Snyder created a series of videos about *On Tyranny*, providing an updated perspective on the book's lessons.

Activities

Algorithms Are Making Kids Desperately Unhappy
The New York Times (Chris Murphy, 18 July 2023)
nytimes.com/2023/07/18/opinion/big-tech-algorithms-kids-discovery.html

In this article, US Senator Chris Murphy describes the effect of social media algorithms on young people.

YALSA Booklists
Young Adult Library Service Association (YALSA)
ala.org/yalsa/booklistsawards/booklists

YALSA provides lists of award-winning fiction, nonfiction, and graphic novels. This site contains lists for the current year, as well as lists from the previous 10+ years.

“We bombard people with sensation. That substitutes for thinking.”

– Ray Bradbury, author of *Fahrenheit 451*

Consider the previous activity about social media. Do you believe this quote captures your own experience with media (TV, social media, etc.)? Why or why not?

"Books are a form of political action. Books are knowledge. Books are reflection. Books change your mind."

– Toni Morrison, author of *Beloved*

Share an example of a time that a book changed your mind or introduced you to a new idea or concept.

"We read books to find out who we are. What other people, real or imaginary, do and think and feel … is an essential guide to our understanding of what we ourselves are and may become."

– Ursula K. Le Guin,
author of *The Hand of Darkness*

How does reading books help us understand ourselves? How does it help us understand others?

"The pursuit of knowing was freedom to me, the right to declare your own curiosities and follow them through all manner of books. I was made for the library, not the classroom. The classroom was a jail of other people's interests. The library was open, unending, free."

– Ta-Nehisi Coates,
author of *Between the World and Me*

How does reading contribute to freedom? How does it contribute to upholding democracy?

HANDOUT SOCIAL MEDIA ALGORITHMS

1. What kind of content do you see most often on your social media accounts? Do you follow the creators of this content, or does most of it "just show up" in your social media feed?

2. According to the video, how can TikTok tell what your interests are? Do you think this is the best method for figuring out users' interests?

3. What are the benefits of social media platforms using an algorithm to only serve you content you will engage with? What are the drawbacks?

4. Even without listening to your microphone or reading your messages, TikTok (and other platforms) have a lot of information about you and your interests. Do you feel comfortable with this? Why or why not?

5. After less than an hour, almost all of the bot's videos were about mental health and depression; most of the other videos it saw were ads. How could limiting someone's feed like this be harmful to the social media user?

6. How might algorithms like this be harmful to society as a whole? How might they support the growth of authoritarianism?

HANDOUT PROJECT: BUILD A READING HABIT

Name: _____ **Due Date:** _____

Step 1: Read a book. As you read, write short summaries of each section (chapter, act, etc.) in your notebook.

- You can choose a book on any topic, from any genre.
- Not sure which book to read? Use one of the following tools:
  - » Wander the shelves at your local library!
  - » WhichBook.net: This website helps you choose a book based on an emotion, character, plot, or geography.
    WhichBook.net
  - » Best Books for Teens: Each year, the New York Public Library updates its list of the 50 best books for teens. Filter the list based on interests, genre, race/ethnicity, gender identity, and more.
    nypl.org/books-more/recommendations/best-books/teens
  - » Speak with a librarian at school or at the local library. They can help you choose a book based on your interests.

Step 2: Answer the following questions (on the back or on a separate piece of paper):

1. Why did you choose this book?
2. What information or new perspectives did you gain by reading this book?
3. What did you learn about yourself by reading this book?
4. Would you recommend this book? Why or why not? Be specific.

Step 3: Unlock your creativity! Create a project to be presented to the class at a later date. Ideas include (but are not limited to):

- Write an original song or poem
- Record a short podcast exploring the themes of the book
- Create a social media post about the book
- Create a painting, sculpture, poster, or other work of art based on the book
- Create a video “trailer” for the book
- Write a book review
- Design a book cover which incorporates the themes or mood of the book

LESSON 7: BELIEVE IN TRUTH

FIGHT AGAINST MISINFORMATION

> Believe in truth. To abandon facts is to abandon freedom. If nothing is true, then no one can criticize power, because there is no basis upon which to do so. If nothing is true, then all is spectacle. The biggest wallet pays for the most blinding lights."
>
> *On Tyranny,* Chapter 10 (p. 65)

OVERVIEW

Content Level	Ages 14-18 (Grades 9-12)
Time	50 Minutes

Description	This lesson is designed to fit into one class period. Teachers should make adjustments as needed to meet the needs of their students. The lesson includes:
	• 2 Activities
	  • Individual Cloze reading to introduce the connection between protecting truth in maintaining freedom
	  • Jigsaw activity in which students will read historical case studies related to the spread of misinformation
	• Closing Discussion Prompts
	• 1 Extension Activity

Guiding Questions	• Why is truth important for a functioning democracy? • How can misinformation undermine democratic institutions? • What steps can individuals take to promote and protect the truth?
Learning Objectives	At the end of this lesson, students will be able to: • Identify the role of truth in maintaining democracy. • Recognize examples of misinformation. • Develop strategies for critical thinking and fact-checking. • Understand personal responsibility in promoting truth.

Materials	• **Google Slides deck** (optional)
	• Student Handouts (also available digitally via **Google Docs**)
	  • **Cloze Paragraph**
	  • **Expert Group worksheet**
	  • **Case Studies**
	  • **Jigsaw Group worksheet**
	• Notebooks/journals

Common Core Standards *Learn more at **corestandards.org**.*	Reading: Informational Text • CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RI.8 Speaking & Listening • CCSS.ELA-Literacy.SL.1
Social Justice Standards *These standards were created by Learning for Justice. Learn more at **bit.ly/LFJ-standards**.*	Identity • ID.9-12.5 Diversity • DI.9-12.5 Justice • JU.9-12.14 Action • AC.9-12.20

INTRODUCTION

In his book *On Tyranny: Twenty Lessons from the Twentieth Century*, Historian and Yale University Professor Timothy Snyder offers practical actions that individuals can take to help stop the spread of authoritarianism. One of the book's lessons, "Believe in truth," holds that "renounc[ing] the difference between what you want to hear and what is actually the case" (66) is the point at which people submit to tyranny. In a democracy, truth is the foundation of freedom and justice. When truth is weakened, the very core of democratic institutions is at risk. Authoritarians often use misinformation and propaganda to create confusion and distrust among people.

This lesson focuses on why truth is essential and how we can protect our democratic values by standing against misinformation. It asks students to analyze a historical case study of misinformation and to consider how information can be manipulated to promote a specific agenda.

"Believe in truth" is Chapter 10 in *On Tyranny*, pages 65-71.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

This lesson was written by Mary Finn with support from Woven Teaching. We are very grateful for her contributions to *Defending Democracy*. For more information about Mary, see Appendix, p. **212**.

FOCUS ON HUMAN RIGHTS

Woven Teaching believes that **human rights education** is essential for students to understand and assert their own rights and to protect the rights of others. As a result, the **Universal Declaration of Human Rights** (UDHR) lies at the core of Woven Teaching's materials. The document's 30 articles outline fundamental human rights: basic rights and freedoms which every human being is entitled to, regardless of race, religion, birthplace, gender, sexual orientation, or other characteristics. Although its articles are not legally binding, the UDHR serves as a moral compass for the international community.

The activities in this lesson connect directly to several UDHR articles, including:

- **Article 19**: Right to freedom of opinion and expression.
- **Article 28**: Right to a free and fair world
- **Article 30**: Human rights belong to you; no one can take away your human rights.

ACTIVITIES

1 THE IMPORTANCE OF TRUTH *10 MINUTES*

Students will engage in a cloze read activity to introduce the connection between protecting truth in maintaining freedom. They will begin to think critically about the relationship between facts, power, and society.

Materials

- **Google Slides deck** (optional)
- Student Handout: Cloze Reading (**Handout A**)

Procedure

1. Briefly explain to the students that they will be completing a cloze reading. Cloze reading is a teaching strategy that uses passages of text with missing words. Students use context clues to fill in the blanks.

2. Distribute the Cloze Reading (**Handout A**) to each student. Ensure that the students do not see the original paragraph beforehand to encourage critical thinking. Emphasize that this exercise is designed to help them think about the role of facts and truth in upholding freedom and challenging power.

3. Instruct students to fill in the blanks of the cloze paragraph based on their understanding of the context and meaning of the passage. Encourage them to think critically about what words best complete the sentences.

4. After students have completed the cloze paragraph, review the expected answers with the class. Briefly discuss why these specific words are important in the context of the passage and how they relate to the broader themes of truth and power.

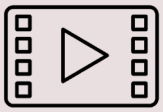
5. Instruct students to spend a couple minutes answering the questions on the worksheet.
    - Do you agree or disagree with this statement? Why or why not?
    - Read the sentence highlighted in grey. What does Snyder mean?

    Ask a few students to share their answers before moving on to the next activity.

CLOZE READING – ANSWER KEY

"To abandon **facts** is to abandon **freedom**. If nothing is **true**, then no one can **criticize** power because there is no **basis** upon which to do so. If nothing is **true**, then all is **spectacle**. The biggest **wallet** pays for the most **blinding** lights."

TIMOTHY SNYDER SPEAKS: *ON TYRANNY*



Timothy Snyder's **YouTube channel** includes a **video** (13:16) on this and each of the other 19 points in *On Tyranny*. If you have time to do so, you may wish to include this video in the lesson with the following discussion questions:

- What does "speak truth to power" mean?
- Snyder says, "free speech is about speaking truth to power." Does this align with your current understanding of free speech? Why or why not?
- Do you agree with Snyder when he says, "we have to believe in truth because it's our only political defense"? Why or why not?

*Technology-free classroom? A transcript for this video is available via **Google Docs**.*

2 MISINFORMATION IN HISTORY *30 MINUTES*

Students will engage in collaborative learning by exploring the role of misinformation in various historical events, fostering a deeper understanding of its impact on society and democracy.

Materials

- **Google Slides deck** (optional)
- Student Handouts
  - » Expert Group worksheet (**Handout B**)
  - » Case Studies (**Handout C**)
    - **The Spanish-American War (1898)**
    - **The Great Influenza (1918-1919)**
    - **The Reichstag Fire (1933)**
    - **The Tet Offensive (1968)**
  - » Jigsaw Group worksheet (**Handout D**)

Procedure

1. Divide students into four Expert Groups. Distribute the Expert Group worksheet (**Handout B**) to each student and a Case Study (**Handout C**) to each group.

2. Give groups 10 minutes to read and discuss their assigned case study. Guide the students to work through the questions on their handout, making sure they understand the key events, the role of misinformation, and its impact on society. Encourage each group to thoroughly answer the questions on their handout and prepare to teach these points to others.

3. After the Expert Group discussions, reassign students into Jigsaw Groups. Each Jigsaw Group should have at least one representative from each of the four Expert Groups. Distribute one Jigsaw Group worksheet (**Handout D**) to each student.

4. In their Jigsaw Groups, students will take turns teaching their case study to the group. As each expert presents, the other students should fill in their Jigsaw Group worksheet. Encourage the students to ask questions and ensure they understand each case study.

5. After the Jigsaw Groups have completed their discussions, bring the class together for a whole-group reflection, discussing the following questions:
   - What similarities did you find among the different case studies regarding the use of misinformation?
   - How can understanding these historical examples help us recognize and combat misinformation today?
   - What strategies can we use to promote truth and critical thinking in our communities?

6. To close the activity, summarize the key takeaways from the activity, emphasizing the importance of critical thinking and truth in defending democracy:
   - **The power of misinformation:** Misinformation can have profound consequences, not only on public opinion but also on government actions and the stability of democratic institutions. Understanding how misinformation is spread, as well as understanding its impact, is crucial in safeguarding democracy.
   - **The role of critical thinking:** By developing critical thinking skills, individuals can better assess the validity of information, resist manipulation, and make informed decisions. This is especially important in an age where information is easily accessible but not always reliable.
   - **Historical lessons and contemporary relevance:** Historical examples of misinformation, such as those studied in this lesson, highlight patterns that can still be seen today. Recognizing these patterns helps us learn from the past and apply those lessons to current and future challenges.
   - **Personal responsibility in promoting truth:** Each individual plays a role in defending democracy by seeking out the truth, questioning dubious information, and sharing accurate, reliable content with others. Small actions, like practicing media literacy and promoting factual information, collectively contribute to a stronger, more resilient democracy.

3 CLOSING: DISCUSSION *10 MINUTES*

Students will engage in a brief class discussion, sharing one action that they can take to promote truth in their community.

Materials

- **Google Slides deck** (optional)

Procedure

1. Begin by emphasizing the key points discussed in the lesson about the importance of truth in defending democracy. Then, ask students to share one action they will take to promote truth in their community. Encourage them to think about practical steps they can implement immediately.

2. Close the session with the following discussion questions:
    - How does the media contribute to the spread of misinformation and the creation of a "collective trance"?
      Possible response: The media can contribute to the spread of misinformation by prioritizing sensational stories over factual reporting, or by failing to verify sources before publishing. This can create a "collective trance" where large groups of people accept false information as truth because it is repeated and reinforced by multiple media outlets.
    - How can individuals and society resist and counteract the distortion of truth by authoritarians and the media?
      Possible response: Practicing media literacy—questioning the information they consume, checking multiple sources, and being skeptical of sensational claims; supporting independent journalism; promoting education about critical thinking; holding media outlets accountable for spreading misinformation
    - Can you think of historical examples not covered in today's lesson where the distortion of truth had significant consequences?

ADDITIONAL MATERIALS

EXTENSION ACTIVITY: SOCIAL MEDIA AND MISINFORMATION

Students will write a short response about their experience with misinformation on social media.

Materials

- Notebooks/journals

Procedure

1. Instruct students to choose one of the following questions and write at least one paragraph in response. Responses must be specific and include examples.
    - **Recent examples:** Can you think of any recent examples where misinformation on social media had significant consequences? Describe the situation and its impact.
    - **Algorithms and misinformation:** How do algorithms on social media platforms contribute to the spread of misinformation? Explain how these algorithms work and their effects.

TEACHING TIP

For more information about algorithms, see:
Wall Street Journal, "How TikTok's Algorithm Figures You Out," YouTube (Video, 13:02), 21 July 2021, **https://youtu.be/nfczi2cl6Cs**. [**Transcript**]

- **Verifying information:** What steps can individuals take to verify the information they see on social media? Discuss strategies for checking the accuracy of online content.

2. Students should be prepared to share their thoughts during the next class session.

RESOURCES

Woven Teaching

Human Rights Education
woventeaching.org/human-rights-education

Learn more about Human Rights Education, a pedagogy rooted in advancing human rights through teaching that promotes cooperation, respect, and the dignity of all people.

Universal Declaration of Human Rights
woventeaching.org/udhr

From this page, students can access information about the history of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, as well as full text and student versions of the document.

Timothy Snyder

On Tyranny: Twenty Lessons from the Twentieth Century
New York: Tim Duggan Books, 2017

The framework created by Professor Timothy Snyder in *On Tyranny: Twenty Lessons from the Twentieth Century* provides the basis for the *Defending Democracy* curriculum.

Lesson 10: Believe in Truth
youtu.be/FdHkkfB_7X0

In 2021, Timothy Snyder created a series of videos about *On Tyranny*, providing an updated perspective on the book's lessons.

Activities

National Association for Media Literacy Education
namle.org

The National Association for Media Literacy Education "aims to make media literacy highly valued and widely practiced as an essential life skill." Its website contains helpful information for parents and educators.

Teenagers and Misinformation: Some Starting Points for Teaching Media Literacy
The New York Times (Katherine Schulten, 30 October 2022)
nytimes.com/2022/10/20/learning/lesson-plans/teenagers-and-misinformation-some-starting-points-for-teaching-media-literacy.html

In this piece for *The New York Times*, Katherine Schulten shares five tips for teachers and librarians to teach students about media literacy.

HANDOUT CLOZE READING

This exercise is designed to help you think about the role of facts and truth in upholding freedom and challenging power. First, fill in the blanks using the words from the word bank. After confirming the correct order, reflect on the questions below.

Word Bank

basis	blinding	criticize
facts	freedom	spectacle
true	true	wallet

Complete the following sentence:

"To abandon _____ is to abandon _____. If nothing is _____, then no one can _____ power because there is no _____ upon which to do so. If nothing is _____, then all is _____. The biggest _____ pays for the most _____ lights."

– Timothy Snyder, *On Tyranny*

Respond to the following questions:

1. Do you agree or disagree with this statement? Why or why not?

2. Read the sentence highlighted in grey. What does Snyder mean?

HANDOUT EXPERT GROUP WORKSHEET

Case Study: _____

1. **Read and discuss:** Begin by reading your assigned case study carefully. Discuss each of the questions below with your group members. Your goal is to understand the key points deeply and prepare to teach them to others.
2. **Answer the questions:** As you discuss each question, record your group's answers in the spaces provided.
3. **Prepare to teach:** Be ready to present your findings to your Jigsaw Group, focusing on the key themes related to misinformation and its impact.

Expert Group Questions

1. What happened in this case study?
   Describe the key events that occurred in your case study. What were the major developments or turning points?

2. What was the misinformation involved?
   Identify and describe the misinformation that played a role in this case study. What false information was spread, and how was it disseminated?

3. How did the misinformation affect public opinion or government actions?
   Discuss how the misinformation influenced the way people thought or acted. Did it lead to any significant changes in government policies or public behavior?

4. What were the consequences of the misinformation?
   Examine the short-term and long-term impacts of the misinformation on society, democracy, or government. What were the outcomes, and who was affected?

5. How, if at all, was the misinformation countered or corrected?
   Explore whether any efforts were made to correct the misinformation. Were these efforts successful? Why or why not?

6. What lessons can be learned from this case study about the role of truth in a democracy?
   Reflect on the broader implications of your case study. What does it teach us about the importance of truth and the dangers of misinformation?

HANDOUT CASE STUDY: SPANISH-AMERICAN WAR (1898)

Background

The Spanish-American War was a conflict between the United States and Spain that occurred in 1898, sparked by the US intervention in the Cuban War of Independence. For years, Cuba had been fighting to break free from Spanish colonial rule. Many Americans sympathized with the Cuban cause, seeing it as similar to their own struggle for independence.

Tensions between the US and Spain grew as reports of Spanish brutality against Cuban rebels and civilians reached American shores. These reports were often exaggerated or sensationalized by American newspapers, a practice known as "yellow journalism." The media's portrayal of Spanish actions fueled public support for intervention.

The situation escalated dramatically when the USS Maine, an American battleship, exploded in Havana Harbor on February 15, 1898, killing over 260 sailors. Although the cause of the explosion was unclear, the US media quickly blamed Spain, leading to widespread public outrage. The rallying cry "Remember the Maine, to Hell with Spain!" captured the nation's mood.

In April 1898, under growing public pressure, the US declared war on Spain, marking the start of a brief but impactful conflict that would significantly alter the global balance of power.

Key Events

- **Explosion of the USS Maine:** On February 15, 1898, the battleship USS Maine exploded in Havana Harbor, Cuba. The cause of the explosion was unclear, but over 260 American sailors were killed.
- **Yellow journalism:** US newspapers, particularly those owned by William Randolph Hearst and Joseph Pulitzer, published sensationalist and often exaggerated reports blaming Spain for the explosion, even though there was no definitive evidence. This style of journalism became known as "yellow journalism."
- **Declaration of war:** The sensationalist media coverage fueled public anger against Spain, leading to the US declaring war on Spain in April 1898.

Misinformation and Its Impact

- **Rushed to judgment:** The newspapers' accusations against Spain were based on speculation, not facts. This misinformation played a significant role in stirring up public support for the war.
- **The role of media:** Yellow journalism demonstrated how the media can influence public opinion and government decisions, sometimes with little regard for truth.

Consequences

- **Territorial changes:** The war ended with the Treaty of Paris, in which Spain ceded control of Cuba, Puerto Rico, Guam, and the Philippines to the US.
- **Long-term impact:** The role of yellow journalism in the war highlighted the dangers of media that prioritizes sensationalism over truth, leading to long-term consequences for both the US and the territories involved.

Reflection Questions

1. How did yellow journalism contribute to the outbreak of the Spanish-American War?

2. What does this case teach us about the responsibility of the media in reporting the truth?

Glossary

- **Cuban War of Independence:** a war fought by Cuban revolutionaries to gain independence from Spanish rule
- **Spanish-American War:** a conflict between the United States and Spain that resulted in the US gaining control of territories like Puerto Rico, Guam, and the Philippines
- **yellow journalism:** a style of sensationalized, exaggerated news reporting to attract readers and influence public opinion

Learn More

- **Article:** "Spanish-American War." Encyclopaedia Britannica. **https://www.britannica.com/event/Spanish-American-War**.
- **Primary sources:** "Yellow Journalism and the Spanish-American War." PBS Learning. **https://ca.pbslearningmedia.org/resource/a410da95-1692-4c77-9ecb-b26f2fd1fdf3/yellow-journalism-and-the-spanish-american-war**.

HANDOUT CASE STUDY: THE GREAT INFLUENZA (1918-1919)

Background

The Great Influenza (also known as the "Spanish Flu") pandemic occurred between 1918 and 1919. It was one of the deadliest in history. The Great Influenza caused the deaths of an estimated 50 million people worldwide, with some estimates even higher. The pandemic hit during the final year of World War I, when many countries, including the United States, were focused on maintaining morale and supporting the war effort. To avoid panic and keep the public focused on the war, governments downplayed the severity of the flu. This decision resulted in a lack of reliable information, and misinformation spread rapidly–false rumors circulated that the virus was created as a biological weapon by enemy nations or that certain ethnic groups were to blame for its spread.

Key Events

- **Outbreak of the flu (1918):** The flu first appeared in the spring of 1918 but resurfaced in a much deadlier wave in the fall of that year. Soldiers returning home from the war, along with mass gatherings for wartime parades and rallies, caused the virus to spread quickly.
- **Misinformation and rumors:** With little official information being shared, rumors about the flu's origins and spread took hold. Some claimed that the flu had been deliberately created by Germany as a weapon of war, while others blamed immigrant communities in the US, such as Italian or Chinese immigrants, for introducing the virus. The flu was dubbed "Spanish Flu," not because it originated in Spain, but because Spain—which was neutral in the war and had fewer censorship restrictions—was one of the few countries reporting openly about the pandemic.
- **Public health failures:** Due to the lack of accurate information, many people did not realize the seriousness of the pandemic. Public health measures such as quarantines and mask mandates were either not followed or introduced too late because the severity of the virus was downplayed. In some cities, like Philadelphia, mass gatherings were allowed to continue, which led to catastrophic outbreaks.

Misinformation and Its Impact

- **Downplaying the crisis:** Governments, particularly those involved in World War I, censored the press and kept the public in the dark about the true scale of the pandemic. As a result, people did not take necessary precautions and continued to gather in large numbers, unaware of the risks.
- **Consequences of misinformation:** The failure to provide clear information allowed misinformation to flourish. Without truthful guidance from authorities, people believed rumors and false claims, leading to poor public health decisions and contributing to the virus's rapid spread.
- **Long-term effects:** The public's loss of trust in the government and health authorities had lasting effects, contributing to skepticism of official narratives that carried over into future crises.

Consequences

- **Erosion of trust:** Over time, as more people died and the public realized that the government had not been transparent about the pandemic's dangers, trust in government institutions declined. People began to question public health measures, and this distrust persisted in the years that followed, damaging the relationship between governments and their citizens.

Reflection Questions

1. How did the spread of misinformation during the Spanish Flu pandemic contribute to the public's distrust in government and public health institutions? What parallels can you see between the Spanish Flu and other health crises where misinformation played a role?

2. How might more accurate and transparent communication from governments have changed the course of the pandemic and the impacts that it had?

Glossary

- **biological weapon:** a harmful biological agent, such as a virus or bacteria, used to cause illness or death as a form of warfare
- **misinformation:** false or misleading information spread either unintentionally or deliberately. False information that is spread intentionally is also called disinformation.
- **public health:** the practice of protecting and improving the health of people and communities through prevention, education, and treatment
- **"Spanish" Flu:** a deadly global influenza pandemic that occurred from 1918 to 1919, killing an estimated 50 million people worldwide
- **World War I:** a global war that lasted from 1914 to 1918, involving many of the world's major powers

Learn More

- **Article:** "1918 Pandemic (H1N1 virus)." Centers for Disease Control (CDC) Archive. **https://archive.cdc.gov/www_cdc_gov/flu/pandemic-resources/1918-pandemic-h1n1.html**.
- **Article:** "Influenza pandemic of 1918-19." Encyclopaedia Britannica. **https://www.britannica.com/event/influenza-pandemic-of-1918-1919**.
- **Article:** "Spanish Flu." History.com. 10 May 2023. **https://www.history.com/topics/world-war-i/1918-flu-pandemic**.

HANDOUT CASE STUDY: THE REICHSTAG FIRE (1933)

Background

The Reichstag Fire occurred on the night of February 27, 1933, in Berlin, Germany. The Reichstag building, which served as the meeting place for the German Parliament, was set on fire, causing extensive damage to the historic structure. This dramatic event unfolded during a period of extreme political instability in Germany, just weeks after Adolf Hitler had been appointed Chancellor. At the time, Germany was grappling with deep economic hardship, social unrest, and widespread dissatisfaction with the Weimar Republic. The fire added to the sense of crisis, creating an atmosphere of fear and uncertainty.

In the aftermath of the fire, the Nazi Party, led by Hitler, quickly pointed to the incident as evidence of a supposed communist plot to overthrow the government. The Nazis used this event as a pretext to intensify their crackdown on political opponents, particularly the communists, and to consolidate their grip on power.

Key Events

- **The fire:** The Reichstag building was set on fire on the night of February 27, 1933. The fire was quickly blamed on a Dutch communist named Marinus van der Lubbe, who was found at the scene and arrested.
- **Hitler's response:** Adolf Hitler and the Nazi Party used the fire as evidence of a supposed communist plot to overthrow the government. They claimed that the fire was the beginning of a larger communist uprising.
- **The Reichstag Fire Decree:** The day after the fire, Hitler convinced President Hindenburg to sign the Reichstag Fire Decree, which suspended many civil liberties in Germany, including freedom of speech, freedom of the press, and the right to assemble. This decree allowed the Nazis to arrest political opponents and suppress opposition.

Misinformation and Its Impact

- **False accusations:** While the Nazis blamed the communists for the fire, many historians believe that the Nazis themselves may have started it to create a crisis that would justify them cracking down on their political enemies.
- **Power grab:** The Reichstag Fire Decree marked the beginning of the Nazi dictatorship, allowing Hitler to consolidate power and eliminate opposition through fear and propaganda.

Consequences

- **End of democracy:** The fire and the subsequent decree were used to dismantle Germany's democratic institutions, paving the way for Hitler's totalitarian regime.
- **Misinformation's role:** The use of misinformation about the fire helped the Nazis to justify the suspension of civil rights and the persecution of political opponents.

Reflection Questions

1. How did the Nazis use the Reichstag Fire to spread misinformation and gain power?

2. What can this case teach us about the dangers of using a crisis to manipulate public opinion?

Glossary

- **chancellor:** a chancellor is the head of the government in some countries, such as Germany. They are responsible for running the country and making decisions about laws and policies. The chancellor is similar to a prime minister.
- **civil liberties:** basic rights and freedoms that protect individuals from government actions
- **communist:** a person who believes in communism, a political system in which all property is owned by the community as a whole
- **dictatorship:** a government where one person or a small group has all the power
- **Nazi:** a member of the National Socialist German Workers' Party led by Adolf Hitler in Germany
- **parliament:** a group of elected representatives who make laws for a country
- **propaganda:** information, especially biased or misleading, used to promote a political cause or point of view
- **Reichstag Fire:** a fire at the German Parliament building in February 1933. The event was used as justification by the Nazis to limit civil liberties in Germany.

Learn More

- **Article:** "The Reichstag Fire." Encyclopaedia Britannica. **https://www.britannica.com/event/Reichstag-fire**.
- **Article:** "The Rise of Hitler and the Nazis." BBC Bitesize. **https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/articles/zxr9kty#zxw2m39**.
- **Article:** United States Holocaust Memorial Museum. "The Reichstag Fire." USHMM Holocaust Encyclopedia. **https://encyclopedia.ushmm.org/content/en/article/the-reichstag-fire**.

HANDOUT CASE STUDY: THE TET OFFENSIVE (1968)

Background

The Tet Offensive was one of the most significant military campaigns during the Vietnam War. It was launched by the North Vietnamese Army and the Viet Cong (a group of communist fighters in South Vietnam) against South Vietnam and its American allies on January 30, 1968. This military campaign took place during Tet, the Vietnamese Lunar New Year, which is a major holiday in Vietnam.

Before the Tet Offensive, many people in the United States believed that the Vietnam War was going well, with American leaders suggesting that victory was near. However, the Tet Offensive drastically changed this perception.

North Vietnamese and Viet Cong forces launched surprise attacks on over 100 cities and towns across South Vietnam, including the capital, Saigon. These attacks were unexpected, as it was the Tet holiday, a time when both sides had previously observed a temporary truce. The scale and intensity of the attacks shocked the American public, who had been led to believe that the enemy was weakened.

Although the Tet Offensive was eventually repelled, and the North Vietnamese and Viet Cong suffered heavy casualties, it had a profound impact on public opinion in the United States. The offensive exposed the gap between the optimistic reports from US government officials and the harsh reality on the ground. Many Americans began to doubt the information coming from their leaders, leading to stronger anti-war sentiment within the US.

The Tet Offensive is often seen as a turning point in the Vietnam War, as it significantly shifted public opinion in the US, influencing the country's decision to begin withdrawing troops from Vietnam.

Key Events

- **Surprise attacks:** The Tet Offensive was a series of surprise attacks on more than 100 cities and towns in South Vietnam. It was one of the largest military campaigns of the Vietnam War.
- **Initial shock:** The scale and intensity of the attacks shocked the American public, who had been led to believe by US government officials that the war was nearing a successful conclusion.
- **Media coverage:** The offensive was heavily covered by the media, and the images of fighting in places like the US Embassy in Saigon contributed to a sense of crisis.

Misinformation and Its Impact

- **Government misinformation:** Before the Tet Offensive, US government officials had repeatedly assured the public that victory in Vietnam was close. The surprise attacks exposed these claims as overly optimistic, leading to a loss of trust in government statements.
- **Public opinion shift:** Despite being a military failure for the North Vietnamese, the Tet Offensive was a strategic victory because it significantly shifted American public opinion

against the war. The gap between the government's optimistic reports and the reality on the ground led to growing anti-war sentiment in the US.

Consequences

- **Erosion of trust:** The Tet Offensive exposed the gap between official government statements and reality, eroding public trust in the US government and leading to increased opposition to the war.
- **Impact on the war:** The loss of public support influenced US policy, leading to a gradual withdrawal of American troops from Vietnam.

Reflection Questions

1. How did the Tet Offensive change public perception of the Vietnam War?

2. What lessons can be learned about the importance of accurate information during times of conflict?

Glossary

- **North Vietnamese Army:** the military forces of North Vietnam, which fought against South Vietnam and its allies during the Vietnam War. A communist guerrilla group, the Viet Cong, also fought against South Vietnam during the war.
- **Saigon:** the capital of South Vietnam during the Vietnam War, which was a key target during the Tet Offensive
- **South Vietnam:** the non-communist part of Vietnam that was allied with the United States during the Vietnam War
- **Tet:** the Vietnamese Lunar New Year, one of the most important holidays in Vietnam, during which the Tet Offensive began
- **Tet Offensive:** a major military campaign during the Vietnam War, launched by North Vietnamese and Viet Cong forces against South Vietnam and its American allies in January 1968
- **Vietnam War:** a conflict that took place from 1955 to 1975 between communist North Vietnam (supported by its communist allies) and South Vietnam (supported by the United States and other anti-communist countries)

Learn More

- **Article:** "Tet Offensive." Encyclopaedia Britannica. **https://www.britannica.com/event/Tet-Offensive**.
- **Video:** "The Tet Offensive." The Vietnam War: A Film by Ken Burns & Lynn Novick. PBS Learning, 5:45. **https://ca.pbslearningmedia.org/resource/1acd1aae-7b42-46c0-bff2-1f961b87b804/the-tet-offensive-video-ken-burns-lynn-novick-the-vietnam-war**.

HANDOUT JIGSAW GROUP WORKSHEET

Case Study: _____

1. **Listen and take notes:** As each expert presents their case study, fill in the chart below with key information. Pay attention to the events, the role of misinformation, its impact on society, and any lessons learned.
2. **Compare and discuss:** After all presentations, use the notes in your chart to discuss common themes and differences between the case studies.
3. **Reflect:** Finally, reflect on the broader implications of what you've learned about the role of misinformation in history.

Questions	Spanish-American War (1898)	Great Influenza (1918-1919)	Reichstag Fire (1933)	Tet Offensive (1968)
What happened in this case study?				
What was the misinformation involved?				
How did the misinformation affect public opinion or government actions?				
What were the consequences of the misinformation?				
How, if at all, was the misinformation countered or corrected?				
What lessons can be learned about the role of truth in a democracy?				

LESSON 8: INVESTIGATE

PRACTICE MEDIA LITERACY

> Investigate. Figure things out for yourself. Spend more time with long articles. Subsidize investigative journalism by subscribing to print media. Realize some of what is on the internet is there to harm you. Learn about sites that investigate propaganda campaigns (some of which come from abroad). Take responsibility for what you communicate with others."
>
> *On Tyranny,* Chapter 11 (p. 72)

OVERVIEW

Content Level	Ages 14-18 (Grades 9-12)
Time	50 Minutes

Description	This lesson is designed to fit into one class period. Teachers should make adjustments as needed to meet the needs of their students. The lesson includes:
	• 2 Activities
	  • All-class case study analysis and discussion about misinformation on social media
	  • Small group case study analysis and discussion
	• Exit Card Prompts
	• 2 Extension Activities

Guiding Questions	• What tactics can people use to figure out what is true and what is false online? • What was the "Love Jihad" moral panic in India and what can be learned from it?
Learning Objectives	At the end of this lesson, students will be able to: • Explain the concept of media literacy. • Explain what a moral panic is. • Practice media literacy by assessing the reliability of a media source.
Materials	• **Google Slides deck** (optional) • Student Handout: **Case Study: "Love Jihad"** (also available digitally via **Google Docs**) • Index cards or small slips of paper
Common Core Standards *Learn more at **corestandards.org**.*	Reading: Informational Text • CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.1 Speaking & Listening • CCSS.ELA-Literacy.SL.1 History/Social Studies • CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.4
Social Justice Standards *These standards were created by Learning for Justice. Learn more at **bit.ly/LFJ-standards**.*	Diversity • DI.9-12.6 • DI.9-12.9 • DI.9-12.10 Justice • JU.9-12.12 • JU.9-12.13 Action • AC.9-12.16

INTRODUCTION

In his book *On Tyranny: Twenty Lessons from the Twentieth Century*, Historian and Yale University Professor Timothy Snyder offers practical actions that individuals can take to help stop the spread of authoritarianism. One of the book's lessons, "Investigate," encourages people to be skeptical, savvy, and media literate. Snyder encourages being critical of the media we consume, whether it's online or in print.

Snyder encourages the development of media literacy. This lesson applies not only to authoritarian regimes; it is also applicable to students' everyday lives. If people think critically, they can see through the manipulations and lies that are on their screens every day.

When people are not vigilant, it is easy for them to believe what they see online. This allows all sorts of interests–from instagram influencers to political candidates–to manipulate them. But if people are vigilant, they can make a difference when it comes to moral panics and disinformation. If students learn media literacy and research strategies, they can be part of the solution by calling out lies and by refusing to share bad sources with friends and family.

"Investigate" is Chapter 11 in *On Tyranny*, pages 72-80.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

This lesson was written by Susie Stainbach with support from Woven Teaching. We are very grateful for her contributions to *Defending Democracy*. For more information about Susie, see Appendix, p. **213**.

FOCUS ON HUMAN RIGHTS

Woven Teaching believes that **human rights education** is essential for students to understand and assert their own rights and to protect the rights of others. As a result, the **Universal Declaration of Human Rights** (UDHR) lies at the core of Woven Teaching's materials. The document's 30 articles outline fundamental human rights: basic rights and freedoms which every human being is entitled to, regardless of race, religion, birthplace, gender, sexual orientation, or other characteristics. Although its articles are not legally binding, the UDHR serves as a moral compass for the international community.

The activities in this lesson connect directly to several UDHR articles, including:

- **Article 16**: Right to marry and start a family.
- **Article 19**: Right to freedom of opinion and expression.

ACTIVITIES

1 SOCIAL MEDIA AT HOME *15 MINUTES*

Students will activate their own media literacy by analyzing a family-based scenario.

Materials

- **Google Slides deck** (optional)
- Scenario (see p. **95**)

Procedure

1. Explain that today's lesson is about media literacy and prejudice. Share the following information:

   Media literacy is an important skill to have to help protect democracy. The lesson also deals with moral panics–widespread fears of something that seems to threaten a society's norms and attack its most vulnerable members. Moral panics spread quickly, via social and other media and via word of mouth.

A good example of a moral panic is the belief that the treats that children collect at Halloween are dangerous, because a seemingly kind neighbor has put a razor blade inside an apple or adulterated candy with dangerous drugs. A 1985 study of these rumors found not one single confirmed incident of any child's death or serious injury. Even so, many people believed for many years that trick-or-treating was dangerous.

2. Briefly ask what students think *media literacy*, *misinformation*, and *disinformation* mean, eliciting or sharing the following definitions:
    - **media literacy:** the ability to critically analyze stories in the media and on social media to determine their accuracy and credibility
    - **misinformation:** information that is misleading, erroneous or false. Misinformation is generally shared—and sometimes created—by people who are unaware that it's inaccurate. This is the best term to use when the intent of the creator or sharer is unknown.
    - **disinformation:** a subset of misinformation that is deliberately created or shared with the intention to misinform and mislead others, usually to achieve a desired ideological, political or financial result

3. Explain that they will read a scenario illustrating a lack of media literacy and critical thinking skills. Media literacy is especially important in resisting moral panics. Sometimes, politicians help spread moral panics for their own purposes.

4. Ask for student volunteers to read the scenario on the following page aloud.

5. When finished, instruct students to discuss a few of the following questions with someone sitting nearby:
    - What parts of this story do you believe and what don't you believe?
      Note: Be sure to tell students that the information Madison and her grandmother read online was false.
    - What emotions are these online stories trying to elicit from their readers?
    - Why do you think that Madison and Grandma each believe the story they read?
    - How could Madison and her grandmother try to confirm or disprove these stories before they take action?

6. Bring students together and debrief as a class, asking students to share what they discussed with their partner. Tell students that neither Madison nor her grandmother are being skeptical (questioning the truthfulness) about what they read online. Much of what we see online is aimed at our anxieties and fears. Its goal is not to tell the truth, but to make us believe certain things and act in certain ways. When we are skeptical and critical, when we practice media literacy, we are pushing back against fear and misinformation and we are defending our democracy.

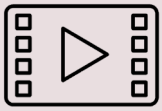
7. Introduce ways that students can practice media literacy:
    - Ask yourself what the creator's goal is. What emotions are they appealing to? What are they trying to get you to do?
      Possible responses: Buy a beauty product, mistrust a certain group of people, influence a political opinion
    - Check what other sources say about the topic. Practice lateral reading to assess whether the story is credible:
        a. Find out more about the *source* of a post or website: do a keyword search of the website/source to find out more information.
        b. Find out more about the *story*: do a keyword search of the story to find out more information. What other sources confirm or discredit the original story?
        c. Compare and contrast the information you read about your source and its story to determine if it is reliable or not. Over time you will develop your own lists of which sources are trustworthy.

Scenario – Madison and Her Grandmother

11th grader Madison is with her grandmother. Grandma is looking at Facebook on her phone when she gasps. "What is it?" asks Madison. Grandma shakes her head. "What a terrible story. A woman was in a big grocery story here in town with her four-year-old. She turned around for just a few seconds and her daughter disappeared! She asked an employee to help her and he got on the loudspeaker and said some sort of code. The store locked all of its doors. They found her daughter alone in the restroom. Her head was half-shaved and she was dressed in boys' clothing. Someone was about to kidnap her!" Grandma shook her head sadly and pressed a button on her phone. "It's so sad, nowadays you can't take your eyes off children for one second. I'm going to repost this on Facebook–it's the least I can do to spread the word!"

Grandma looks up from her phone. "Are you hungry or thirsty, honey? Can I get you anything?" "Do you have any coffee, Grandma?" asks Madison. Grandma looks surprised. "I sure do–but you don't drink coffee, do you?" Madison shakes her head. "I don't drink it, but I've seen a bunch of TikToks about giving yourself a coffee enema. It really cleans you out! It detoxes your liver and removes parasites from your digestive tract. I want to try it!"

TIMOTHY SNYDER SPEAKS: *ON TYRANNY*



Timothy Snyder's **YouTube channel** includes a **video** (5:12) on this and each of the other 19 points in *On Tyranny*. If you have time to do so, you may wish to include this video in the lesson with the following discussion questions:

- Snyder says, "If we're going to have a future as a free country, we're going to need a lot more journalism, and especially journalism that comes from below. Journalism that is about the places we actually live." What local media sources do you and your family or friends follow? What type of stories are shared? Is it biased? How do you know?

  Note: Many people on blogs and social media refer to themselves as "journalists." Remind students to be mindful that anyone, regardless of whether they report truthfully, can call themselves a journalist, so it is important to consider what credentials or lived experiences the journalist may have.

- In the absence of balanced journalism, what tools can you use to try to verify the information in a news story?

*Technology-free classroom? A transcript for this video is available via **Google Docs**.*

2 "LOVE JIHAD" MORAL PANIC *15 MINUTES*

Students will learn about a moral panic that spread via social media in India.

Materials

- **Google Slides deck** (optional)
- Student Handout: Case Study: "Love Jihad" (**Handout A**)

Procedure

1. Explain that the next activity is about media literacy and moral panic in India.

2. Divide students into small groups and distribute one "Love Jihad" case study (**Handout A**) to each student. Instruct students to read the handout carefully, underlining any details they find interesting and circling anything they have questions about.

3. After everyone has finished reading, students will take turns sharing what they found interesting and what questions they have. Students will then discuss the following questions, either in small groups or as a whole class:
    - Why did some people believe that “Love Jihad” was real?
    - Why did politicians claim that they would stamp out “Love Jihad” if it was not a real problem?
    - How can moral panics be detrimental to democracy or human rights?

4. After a few minutes, debrief as a class. Ask students what questions they might have.

3 CLOSING: EXIT CARD *5 MINUTES*

Students will complete an exit card, reflecting on how they can strengthen their media literacy skills.

Materials

- **Google Slides deck** (optional)
- Index cards or small slips of paper

Procedure

1. Before distributing the “exit cards” (index cards), remind students that while some forms of media literacy are very large (like becoming a journalist) and some are small (like knowing not to share inaccurate posts on social media), all of them help to safeguard an engaged citizenship of a strong democracy.

2. Provide each student with an index card and ask them to answer the following questions:
    - How would you help a friend become a better critical thinker when it comes to social media?
    - How can young people support each other around media literacy?

3. You may wish to begin the next class session by reading some of the student responses (anonymously) or by answering questions they shared.

EXTENSION ACTIVITY: MAKING COMPARISONS

Students will compare "Love Jihad" to interracial marriage in the United States in the twentieth century.

Materials

- Student Handout: Case Study: *Loving v. Virginia* (**Handout B**)

Procedure

1. Divide students into small groups and distribute one *Loving v. Virginia* case study (**Handout B**) to each student. Instruct students to read the handout carefully, underlining any details they find interesting and circling anything they have questions about.

2. After everyone has finished reading, debrief as a class. Ask students to take turns sharing what they found interesting and what questions they have. Students will then discuss the following questions, either in small groups or as a whole class:
    - Why was interracial marriage illegal in the US?
    - Do you see any comparisons between "Love Jihad" and interracial marriage in the US?

EXTENSION ACTIVITY: UNDERSTANDING RELIGIOUS NATIONALISM

Students will compare Hindu nationalism in India with Christian nationalism in the United States.

Materials

- Student Handout: Hindu Nationalism and Christian Nationalism (**Handout C**)

Procedure

1. Divide students into small groups and distribute Hindu Nationalism and Christian Nationalism (**Handout C**) to each student. Instruct students to read the handout carefully, underlining any details they find interesting and circling anything they have questions about.

2. After everyone has finished reading, debrief as a class. Ask students to take turns sharing what they found interesting and what questions they have. Students will then discuss the following questions, either in small groups or as a whole class:
    - How are Hindu nationalism and Christian nationalism similar? How are they different?
    - Does thinking about Hindu nationalism change the way you see Christian nationalism?

RESOURCES

Woven Teaching

Human Rights Education
woventeaching.org/human-rights-education

Learn more about Human Rights Education, a pedagogy rooted in advancing human rights through teaching that promotes cooperation, respect, and the dignity of all people.

Universal Declaration of Human Rights
woventeaching.org/udhr

From this page, students can access information about the history of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, as well as full text and student versions of the document.

Timothy Snyder

On Tyranny: Twenty Lessons from the Twentieth Century
New York: Tim Duggan Books, 2017

The framework created by Professor Timothy Snyder in *On Tyranny: Twenty Lessons from the Twentieth Century* provides the basis for the *Defending Democracy* curriculum.

Lesson 11: Investigate
youtu.be/DLFv-d8AleQ

In 2021, Timothy Snyder created a series of videos about *On Tyranny*, providing an updated perspective on the book's lessons.

Activities

"In India, boy meets girl, proposes — and gets accused of jihad"
NPR (Lauren Frayer, 10 October 2021)
npr.org/2021/10/10/1041105988/india-muslim-hindu-interfaith-wedding-conversion

This article outlines some of the social and legal issues faced by interfaith couples in India.

Loving v. Virginia
Encyclopaedia Britannica
britannica.com/event/Loving-v-Virginia

Students can take a closer look at the case of *Loving v. Virginia*, including photos and primary source documents.

HANDOUT CASE STUDY: "LOVE JIHAD"

"Love Jihad" was a moral panic in India between 2009 and 2020. This panic is a good example of an untrue story that spread on social and other media.

A moral panic is a widespread fear of something frightening that seems to threaten a society's norms, standards, and morals. Moral panics spread quickly, via social and other media and via word of mouth. Sometimes, politicians help to spread moral panics for their own purposes.

The majority of Indian people, about one billion people, are Hindu. They are the dominant culture. About 180 million Indian people (16 percent of the population, or one in six) are Muslim. There are also other small religious communities (of Sikhs, Buddhists, Christians, and Jains). Many Hindu marriages are arranged by parents and families. Marriage between Hindus and Muslims are very rare–only about two percent of marriages.

India was founded in 1947 as a multicultural, multireligious democracy, but Hindu nationalists believe that the Hindu religion and Hindu culture should be the basis of the state and its policies. India is currently ruled by a Hindu nationalist party (the Bharatiya Janata Party or BJP). Hindu nationalists are proud of being Indian and proud of India, but only of their specific vision of India as a country for Hindus who follow Hindu traditions. They believe that Muslims are second-class citizens who are trying to take over India. They claim that Muslims are waging a "*jihad*"[1] against Hindus, and are trying to have large families so as to outnumber Hindus and rule India as a Muslim country. There is no proof that this is happening; it is a moral panic.

Between 2009 and 2020 Hindu nationalists promoted the idea that Hindu culture and Hindu women were in danger because of a Muslim "Love Jihad." They claimed that Muslim men were seducing Hindu women into lives of oppression–tricking them into marriages they could not escape and forcing them to have many Muslim children. They also warned that Muslim men were stealing Hindu girls from their families and that Hindu parents had to protect their daughters. These stories and ideas spread quickly on social media including Facebook and Twitter.

People spreading the fear of "Love Jihad" often falsified real stories to make their point. A good example of this is the coverage of famous actors Kareena Kapoor (who is Hindu) and Saif Ali Khan (who is Muslim). In 2015 a Hindu nationalist women's magazine used the couple to warn about the dangers of interreligious marriage. It published a photoshopped image of Kapoor on its cover in which the left side of Kapoor's face depicted her as Hindu, while the right side depicted her as Muslim, wearing a niqab. The headline read "Love Jihad: Changing the Nation Through Religious Conversion." The image made it seem like Kapoor had converted to Islam, even though she had not. It also made it seem like there was a shadowy conspiracy behind her husband's interest in her, even though there was not.

The "Love Jihad" was not real. There is no evidence of Hindu women being coerced into marriage or of any kind of Muslim conspiracy. But the idea of the "Love Jihad" played on

[1] In Islam, *jihad* means striving or exerting with an admirable goal. The word is often misused to mean a violent "holy war." For more information, see Religious Education Freedom Project and the Interfaith Alliance, "What is the Truth about American Muslims?" Learning for Justice, **https://www.learningforjustice.org/magazine/publications/what-is-the-truth-about-american-muslims/misunderstood-terms-and-practices**.

existing fears: fears of the Muslim majority, fears of Muslim men as savage and hypersexual, fears that Hindu women were choosing their own husbands rather than deferring to their parents, and fears that a traditional way of life was disappearing.

Stories about "Love Jihad" circulated on social media and on Hindu nationalist news sites. There were Facebook groups devoted to warning women of the dangers of "Love Jihad." Hashtags like #LoveJihad and #HinduGirlsHunted trended on Twitter. Hindu nationalist women's groups set up counseling hotlines for the many women they claimed had been victimized by "Love Jihadists." News stations used sensational headlines and catchphrases.

These media campaigns were extremely effective and impacted Indian politics. Some Hindu nationalist politicians campaigned for election by promising to stamp out the "Love Jihad." Government agencies were called on to investigate the nonexistent conspiracy. Two states passed laws against interfaith marriages obtained by force. These laws made it difficult for Hindus to convert to other religions for any reason, and made it difficult for interreligious couples to marry.

There were also attempts to debunk the "Love Jihad" panic by journalists and websites. But anti-Muslim hashtags were much easier to find than reliable news sources.

Notes

HANDOUT CASE STUDY: *LOVING V. VIRGINIA*

For most of American history, interracial marriage was illegal. Most white people opposed marriage between white people and people of other races, and especially between white and Black people.

The first law against 'miscegenation' (interracial marriage) was adopted in Virginia in 1661–42 years after the arrival of the first enslaved Black Africans to North America and long before the United States was a nation or Virginia was a state. As white colonists codified slavery as specific to Black people, and as a hereditary status, they also codified interracial marriage as illegal. Black men were depicted as savage and overly sexual, a danger to white women. Interracial marriage was seen by many as unnatural and dangerous. Laws against intermarriage lasted until 1967–longer than slavery and longer than school segregation.

In 1863, during the Civil War, an anonymous pamphlet titled *Miscegenation: The Theory of the Blending of the Races Applied to the American White Man and Negro* was circulated. It was supposedly written by an abolitionist who believed that "the white man should marry the black woman and the white woman the black man." It warned that Southern white women and white women of Irish descent were particularly attracted to Black men. In reality, the pamphlet was a hoax. It was not written by an abolitionist; it was written by two racist journalists who supported slavery and wanted to provoke white readers' racial anxieties.

After the Civil War and Reconstruction, laws against interracial marriage were passed all over the country. Over a hundred laws prohibiting interracial marriage and cohabitation were passed between 1865 and the 1950s. About two thirds of these statutes were passed in Southern states, but 37 percent were passed outside of the South. For most of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, there were laws against interracial marriage in more than forty states.

In 1912, heavyweight boxing champion Jack Johnson (1878–1946), who was Black, traveled across state lines with Lucille Cameron, a white woman. Although the couple had a consensual relationship, Cameron's mother filed abduction charges against Johnson. The couple later married, but their relationship was considered scandalous.

This finally changed in 1967 because of a famous Supreme Court case, *Loving v. Virginia*. Richard Loving, a white man, and Mildred Jeter, a woman of mixed African American and Native American ancestry, traveled from their residences in Central Point, Virginia, to Washington, DC to be married in June 1958. They then returned to Virginia, where their marriage was illegal due to anti-miscegenation laws.

One morning in July 1958, police burst into the Lovings' bedroom and arrested them. The Lovings were in violation of Virginia's 1924 *Act to Preserve Racial Integrity*. The Lovings pleaded guilty. They were sentenced to one year in jail but suspended the sentence on the condition that the couple leave the state immediately and not return for 25 years. The Lovings moved to Washington, DC but they did not stop fighting. Their case reached the US Supreme Court in 1967. When the case began, sixteen states—Texas, Oklahoma, Missouri, Arkansas, Louisiana, Kentucky, West Virginia, Virginia, Delaware, Tennessee, Mississippi, Alabama, Georgia, North Carolina, South Carolina, and Florida—still enforced laws prohibiting marriage between white and non-white people.

Robert D. McIlwaine III defended Virginia's anti-miscegenation law before the Supreme Court. He compared it to laws against incest and polygamy. However, the Supreme Court unanimously reversed the Lovings' convictions. It said that Virginia had "no legitimate overriding purpose" in preventing interracial marriage, and that the freedom to marry was a basic civil right. *Loving v. Virginia* invalidated anti-miscegenation laws against interracial marriage across the United States.

Notes

HANDOUT HINDU NATIONALISM AND CHRISTIAN NATIONALISM

Nationalism is the belief that your own country (or 'nation-state') is the best in the world. Nationalists believe that the majority group in their nation–defined by race, ethnicity, or religion–is the most important group, and that their interests should be prioritized over those of minority groups. For example, American nationalists often state that everyone in the US should speak English and that schools and other governmental bodies should not publish documents in any other language.

In the past 30 years, a specific type of nationalism has surged globally–religious nationalism. Religious nationalism holds that the nation should prioritize the needs and values of one majority religious group.

Some Americans are nationalists; they believe that the US is unique among nations in the world. Some Americans are Christian nationalists: they believe that the US is a Christian nation and that America's laws should be rooted in Christian values. A 2023 survey by PRRI and Brookings found that 10%-19% of Americans view themselves as adherents of Christian nationalism or sympathize with the views of Christian nationalists.[1]

This table outlines some features of Hindu nationalism in India and Christian nationalism in the United States. After you look at it, your teacher may ask you to think about the following questions:

1. How are Hindu nationalism and Christian nationalism similar? How are they different?
2. Does thinking about Hindu nationalism change the way you see Christian nationalism?

Hindu Nationalism	Christian Nationalism
is the idea that India is, at heart and historically, a Hindu country. The government should take steps to keep it that way.	is the idea that the US is, at heart and historically, a white Christian country. The government should take steps to keep it that way.
is a religious *and* political belief system	is a religious *and* political belief system
is a cultural framework that blurs the distinctions between its adherents' Hindu identity and their Indian identity, viewing the two as one thing; Indian society should be Hindu.	is a cultural framework that blurs the distinctions between its adherents' Christian identity and their American identity, viewing the two as one thing; 'real' Americans are Christians.
holds that Hinduism should shape the state and politics. The government should promote and enforce pro-Hindu and anti-Muslim laws and regulations.	holds Christianity should shape the state and politics. They say that was the Founders' intention. Christian nationalists want the government to promote—or even enforce—Christianity's position within it.

[1] "A Christian Nation? Understanding the Threat of Christian Nationalism to American Democracy and Culture," PRRI, 8 February 2023, **https://www.prri.org/research/a-christian-nation-understanding-the-threat-of-christian-nationalism-to-american-democracy-and-culture/**.

Today, Hindus make up 80 percent of Indians. Even so, Hindu nationalists are afraid that Muslims will come to outnumber Hindus in India.	Today, only about 44% percent of Americans identify as white Christians. Christian nationalists are disturbed that white Christians are no longer the majority of Americans and they see Christian nationalism as the only way to get the nation back on the right track.
Hindu nationalists do not see Muslims as "real" or "patriotic" Indians. To them, only Hindus are true Indians. Muslims are enemies of India and a threat to Hindus.	Christian nationalists have a narrow view of who can be a "real" American, limiting it to people who are white, Christian and US-born, and whose families have European roots. To them, nonwhites and non-Christians–especially Muslims–are enemies of the US and a threat to the US.
Current Prime Minister Narendra Modi is a Hindu nationalist. He belongs to a Hindu nationalist political party, the Bharatiya Janata Party, or BJP.	Prominent US politicians who are Christian nationalists include Speaker of the House of Representatives Mike Johnson and Missouri Senator Josh Hawley. Both are Republicans.
India was founded as a multicultural, multireligious democracy with a Hindu majority. Hindu nationalists believe that this was a moral and political mistake and that India should be a Hindu country.	Christian nationalists assert that America is and must remain a "Christian nation"—not just as an observation about the American past, but as a statement about what America must continue to be in the future.
Hindu nationalists want the government to make converting from Hinduism difficult.	Christian nationalists want to make some of their beliefs–such as the beliefs that abortion and divorce are immoral–into law.
Hindu nationalists want the government to make marriage between a Hindu and a non-Hindu difficult. In some states this is already the case.	Christian nationalists want to mandate that public school curricula depict Christianity in a favorable light and as central to American history. They want to mandate Christian prayer in public schools.

Notes

LESSON 9: TAKE RESPONSIBILITY FOR THE FACE OF THE WORLD

TAKE ACTION, HOWEVER SMALL

> "Take responsibility for the face of the world. The symbols of today enable the reality of tomorrow. Notice the swastikas and the other signs of hate. Do not look away, and do not get used to them. Remove them yourself and set an example for others to do so."
>
> *On Tyranny,* Chapter 4 (p. 32)

OVERVIEW

Content Level	Ages 14-18 (Grades 9-12)
Time	50 Minutes

Description	This lesson is designed to fit into one class period. Teachers should make adjustments as needed to meet the needs of their students. The lesson includes:
	• 3 Activities
	  • All-class brainstorm about signs and symbols
	  • All-class review of artworks by Cibo and Ai Weiwei and discussion about activism through art
	  • Individual art project followed by a gallery walk
	• Reflection Prompts
	• 2 Extension Activities

Guiding Questions	• How do symbols and signs shape our communities? • How can we use symbols and signs to promote positive civic action? • How can we use art to support inclusive democracies?
Learning Objectives	At the end of this lesson, students will be able to: • Differentiate between signs and symbols and analyze their power in shaping public spaces and attitudes. • Understand how contemporary artists Pier Paolo Spinazzè (Cibo) and Ai Weiwei use art to challenge hate and authoritarianism. • Create their own art, inspired by these artists, that transforms negative or neutral imagery into positive, democratic symbols.
Materials	• **Google Slides deck** (optional) • Images: Art by Cibo and Ai Weiwei (see p. **113**) • Art supplies • Index cards or small slips of paper • Notebooks/journals
Common Core Standards *Learn more at **corestandards.org**.*	Reading: Informational Text • CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RI.1 Speaking & Listening • CCSS.ELA-Literacy.SL.1
Social Justice Standards *These standards were created by Learning for Justice. Learn more at **bit.ly/LFJ-standards**.*	Diversity • DI.9-12.6 Justice • JU.9-12.11

INTRODUCTION

In his book *On Tyranny: Twenty Lessons from the Twentieth Century*, Historian and Yale University Professor Timothy Snyder offers practical actions that individuals can take to help stop the spread of authoritarianism. One of the book's lessons, "Take responsibility for the face of the world," demonstrates how authoritarianism cultivates a climate in which public symbols, slogans, and images support the goals of the regime.

This lesson focuses on culturally responsive teaching by emphasizing positive artistic expression as a tool for civic action. Students will learn about global artists who use their work to respond to authoritarianism, hate, and social division. They will engage in art-making activities that support them to transform public or personal symbols into messages of democracy and hope, using trauma-informed methods that avoid consuming or visualizing hateful content.

This lesson aims to support students to identify and understand the origin and purpose of hateful symbols and images; to resist the urge to become desensitized to and develop a practice of destroying and removing symbols of hate; and to harness the power of symbols to project democratic values into the public sphere, thereby breaking the spell of authoritarianism and giving others permission and encouragement to join in.

"Take responsibility for the face of the world" is Chapter 4 in *On Tyranny*, pages 32-37.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

This lesson was written by Mariah Rankine-Landers with support from Woven Teaching. We are very grateful for her contributions to *Defending Democracy*. For more information about Mariah, see Appendix, p. **213**.

FOCUS ON HUMAN RIGHTS

Woven Teaching believes that **human rights education** is essential for students to understand and assert their own rights and to protect the rights of others. As a result, the **Universal Declaration of Human Rights** (UDHR) lies at the core of Woven Teaching's materials. The document's 30 articles outline fundamental human rights: basic rights and freedoms which every human being is entitled to, regardless of race, religion, birthplace, gender, sexual orientation, or other characteristics. Although its articles are not legally binding, the UDHR serves as a moral compass for the international community.

The activities in this lesson connect directly to several UDHR articles, including:

- **Article 1**: Right to equality, dignity, and respect.
- **Article 19**: Right to freedom of opinion and expression.
- **Article 27**: Right to participate in cultural, artistic, and scientific life.

ACTIVITIES

1 UNDERSTANDING SIGNS AND SYMBOLS *5 MINUTES*

Students will brainstorm the different signs and symbols they encounter every day.

Materials

- **Google Slides deck** (optional)

Procedure

1. Begin by sharing the following definitions:
    - **sign:** a direct representation that gives specific information (e.g., a stop sign or a restroom sign)
    - **symbol:** an abstract image or object that represents a broader idea, emotion, or belief (e.g., a heart symbol representing love or a peace sign)

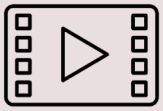
2. Ask the class for examples of signs and symbols they encounter every day (e.g., corporate logos, road signs, national flags). Write their examples on the board and discuss how symbols convey deeper meanings beyond what is immediately visible. Facilitate further discussion by asking:
    - Why are symbols important in shaping how we see the world?
    - How do certain symbols promote fear, hate, or division? How can we reclaim or replace them with positive symbols?

3. Read the following quote from Timothy Snyder's *On Tyranny* aloud:

    "Take responsibility for the face of the world. The symbols of today enable the reality of tomorrow. Notice the swastikas and the other signs of hate. Do not look away, and do not get used to them. Remove them yourself and set an example for others to do so" (32).

4. Ask: *How might covering or removing hateful symbols help to protect democracy?*

TIMOTHY SNYDER SPEAKS: *ON TYRANNY*



Timothy Snyder's **YouTube channel** includes a **video** (11:52) on this and each of the other 19 points in *On Tyranny*. If you have time to do so, you may wish to include this video in the lesson with the following discussion questions:

- Snyder says "If we think about freedom just in terms of what's easiest for us to do, what we find most convenient in a given moment, of course we're never going to rub away a swastika [...] but what if freedom is actually a collective project? What if in order for each of us to be free, all of us have to do something–if only a little something?" What are some small things that people can do to contribute to freedom?
- What is one small thing that you have done recently to contribute to freedom?

*Technology-free classroom? A transcript for this video is available via **Google Docs**.*

2 ACTION THROUGH ART *10 MINUTES*

Students will view and discuss the art of Pier Paolo Spinazzè (Cibo) and Ai Weiwei, two contemporary visual artists.

Materials

- **Google Slides deck** (optional)
- Art by Cibo and Ai Weiwei (see p. **113** or Google Slides deck)

Procedure

1. Explain that you will now look at the work of two visual artists who use art to remove hateful signs and symbols and/or challenge authoritarianism through the making of signs and symbols.

   Pier Paolo Spinazzè (Cibo)

   Cibo is an Italian street artist who is known for his creative responses to hate symbols like swastikas or racist graffiti in public spaces. Rather than simply painting over them, he transforms them into playful, colorful images of food—pizzas, pastries, fruits, and vegetables.

2. Show students examples of Cibo's work and ask: *Why might Cibo choose food as a response to symbols of hate?*

3. Discuss how Cibo's art reclaims public space, turning something negative into something joyful and accessible to everyone.

   Ai Weiwei

   Ai Weiwei is a Chinese contemporary artist and activist who uses symbols in his artwork to critique authoritarianism and promote democracy, free speech, and human rights. His installations often include symbols like fences, surveillance cameras, and freedom of movement to reflect the struggles for personal liberty and political justice.

4. Show examples of Ai Weiwei's installations (e.g., his work with refugee boats, installations about government surveillance).

5. Discuss the following questions:
   - How does Ai Weiwei use symbols to challenge authority?
   - How does his art inspire viewers to think critically about freedom and rights?

6. Close by sharing that art is just one way to counter hateful speech and images. Ask: *What are some other ways to counter hateful words or images?*

3 TRANSFORMING NEGATIVE SYMBOLS *30 MINUTES*

Students will create their own works of art inspired by Cibo or Ai Weiwei.

Materials

- **Google Slides deck** (optional)
- Art supplies: markers, paints, colored pencils, brushes, canvases/paper, and digital art tools (if available)

Procedure

1. Explain that we each have the ability to create. And we certainly each have the ability to harness the power

of symbols to project democratic values into the public sphere, thereby breaking the spell of authoritarianism and giving others permission and encouragement to join us!

2. Introduce students to two project options, inspired by either Cibo or Ai Weiwei:
    a. **Cibo-Inspired Project**
    Ask students to think of a neutral sign or symbol or message in their community (e.g., a billboard, a mundane sign) that could be transformed into something more positive or joyful. They will sketch or paint a new version of the sign or symbol, using playful imagery like food, nature, or vibrant patterns to give it new meaning.

    Example: A "No Trespassing" sign could be transformed into a welcoming plate of pasta, inviting connection rather than exclusion.

    b. **Ai Weiwei-Inspired Project**
    Ask students to think of a symbol or object that reflects a civic issue they care about (e.g., justice, freedom, democracy). Using Ai Weiwei's approach, they will create an artwork that critiques the symbol's negative use or reframes it to promote social change.

    Example: A surveillance camera could be reimagined as a tool for documenting community stories rather than enforcing control.

3. Students will work individually or in small groups to create their artwork using their preferred medium (drawing, painting, digital tools).

4. Once students complete their art projects, display their work around the classroom. Students will participate in a silent gallery walk, reflecting on their peers' interpretations and transformations of symbols. Provide reflection questions for students to consider as they view the artwork:
    - What emotions does each piece evoke?
    - How do these new signs or symbols change the meaning of the original signs or symbols?
    - How do they reflect the values of unity, democracy, or civic responsibility?

5. After the gallery walk, facilitate a group discussion with the following questions:
    - How did transforming signs and symbols help change their meaning?
    - How do symbols of positivity, like those created by Cibo and Ai Weiwei, contribute to a more inclusive and democratic society?

4 CLOSING: REFLECTION *5 MINUTES*

Students will reflect on the importance of promoting positive messages in public spaces.

Materials

- **Google Slides deck** (optional)
- Index cards or small slips of paper

Procedure

1. Lead students in a brief reflection (either a quick discussion or have them respond on index cards to share with you), answering the following questions:
    - What did you learn about the power of signs and symbols today?
    - How can you use art to reshape public spaces and promote positive messages in your community?

2. Encourage students to continue thinking about how the signs and symbols they encounter in their daily lives could be changed or improved to reflect values of unity and democracy.

EXTENSION ACTIVITY: ARTISTS AND SYMBOLS

Students will research a contemporary artist and complete an art project inspired by the artist's approach to symbols.

Materials

- Art supplies: markers, paints, colored pencils, brushes, canvases/paper, and digital art tools (if available)
- Computer/internet access for each student

Procedure

1. Instruct students to research another contemporary artist who uses symbols in their work (e.g., Mickalene Thomas, Shepard Fairey). Explain that they will present this artist and create a small work of art inspired by their approach to symbols, including how symbols can perpetuate or change narratives and debunk or reframe core ideas.

   They should begin by either choosing an artist or by selecting a core issue or idea on which they would like to change/challenge current thinking through development of an art piece that uses symbols.

2. Students will present their projects at a future class session (or digitally on Google Classroom or a similar platform).

ADDITIONAL ARTISTS FOR INSPIRATION

Shirin Neshat
Shirin Neshat is an Iranian visual artist who works in photography, video, and film. Her work explores the intersections of gender, politics, and cultural identity, particularly focusing on women in Islamic societies.

Neshat uses Farsi calligraphy over black-and-white images of veiled women, symbolizing the tensions between religion, politics, and gender. The calligraphy serves as a symbolic marker of cultural narratives and personal stories.

Her *Women of Allah* series examines the role of women in post-revolutionary Iran, focusing on themes of martyrdom, identity, and societal expectations.

Mickalene Thomas
Mickalene Thomas is an American contemporary artist known for her vibrant, textured paintings and installations that celebrate the beauty, power, and agency of Black women.

Thomas incorporates patterns, rhinestones, and textiles from the 1970s, using symbols of femininity, power, and cultural heritage. She reclaims visual representation of Black women, using symbols from popular culture and art history.

Her *Le Déjeuner sur l'Herbe: Les Trois Femmes Noires* is a reinterpretation of Manet's painting, symbolizing self determination, power, and visibility for Black women.

Juliana Huxtable
Juliana Huxtable is a trans artist, poet, and performer whose work explores themes of gender, race, and technology. Her interdisciplinary art delves into the fluidity of identity and the intersection of the digital and physical world.

Huxtable uses her body as a symbol, combined with digital manipulations, to challenge societal norms around gender and race. She incorporates symbols from cyber culture, Afrofuturism, and transhumanism to explore new narratives around body politics.

In *Untitled (Lil' Marvel)*, she reimagines herself as a superhero, blending symbols from mythology and the internet to create a transgressive self-portrait.

Shepard Fairey
Shepard Fairey is an American street artist and activist, known for using symbols to promote justice, equality, and political action.

Fairey often employs bold, iconic symbols in his work, such as the *Hope* poster during Barack Obama's US presidential campaign, to evoke unity and inspire social change.

His *Obey Giant* series and *Hope* poster use strong, recognizable symbols to encourage public dialogue about power, equality, and social responsibility.

EXTENSION ACTIVITY: COLOR, SYMBOL, IMAGE PROTOCOL

Students will reflect on the power of symbols and how they communicate complex ideas through the Color, Symbol, Image protocol.[1] This activity connects to the lesson by encouraging students to creatively express their understanding of civic responsibility, unity, or social change, inspired by the artists studied.

Materials

- Drawing paper
- Pens/markers
- Printed or projected art from artists mentioned in the lesson or previous extension activity

Procedure

1. Briefly explain the *Color, Symbol, Image* protocol (a thinking routine by Harvard Graduate School of Education's Project Zero):

   Ask students to choose a color, a symbol, and an image that represents a theme or idea we've been exploring in today's lesson—such as civic responsibility, unity, activism, or reclaiming public space. The color represents the feeling behind the idea, the symbol represents the concept itself, and the image shows what this idea might look like in the world.

2. Display several works from the artists mentioned in this lesson (e.g., **a piece from Cibo** covering a hate symbol, Ai Weiwei's ***Sunflower Seeds***, Shirin Neshat's ***Women of Allah***, etc.), or from other artists who use signs and symbols to explore democratic messages.

3. Ask students to quietly reflect on the themes they've been learning about and choose one concept they want to explore further (e.g., reclaiming public spaces, challenging hate, promoting democracy, or empowerment). Instruct them to:
   - Choose a color that represents the emotion of their concept.
   - Choose or design a symbol that represents the idea or theme they are exploring.
   - Draw or describe an image that shows how this idea might look in the world.

4. In pairs or small groups, students will share their Color, Symbol, and Image. Encourage them to explain:
   - Why they chose the color, what it represents to them.
   - The meaning behind their chosen symbol and what it conveys.
   - How their image visually connects to their chosen theme.

[1] "Color, Symbol, Image," Project Zero, Harvard Graduate School of Education, **https://pz.harvard.edu/resources/color-symbol-image**.

5. Bring the class together to debrief. Invite a few volunteers to share their work with the entire class. Facilitate a quick discussion, asking:
    - What did you notice about the different colors, symbols, and images people chose?
    - How do different creative choices communicate the same idea in unique ways?

RESOURCES

Woven Teaching

Human Rights Education
woventeaching.org/human-rights-education

Learn more about Human Rights Education, a pedagogy rooted in advancing human rights through teaching that promotes cooperation, respect, and the dignity of all people.

Universal Declaration of Human Rights
woventeaching.org/udhr

From this page, students can access information about the history of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, as well as full text and student versions of the document.

Timothy Snyder

On Tyranny: Twenty Lessons from the Twentieth Century
New York: Tim Duggan Books, 2017

The framework created by Professor Timothy Snyder in *On Tyranny: Twenty Lessons from the Twentieth Century* provides the basis for the *Defending Democracy* curriculum.

Lesson 4: Take Responsibility for the Face of the World
youtu.be/ysCCEuMC6xo

In 2021, Timothy Snyder created a series of videos about *On Tyranny*, providing an updated perspective on the book's lessons.

Activities

Culturally Responsive Teaching
National Equity Project
nationalequityproject.org/culturally-responsive-teaching

This brief overview provides information for educators about culturally responsive teaching.

Italian artist 'Cibo' covers racist graffiti with food murals
Reuters
youtu.be/b359qUdnCy8

This brief video (2:33) features an interview with Cibo in which he explains people's duty to their communities.

The Danger of Silence
Clint Smith (via TED)
ted.com/talks/clint_smith_the_danger_of_silence

In this video (4:09), educator Clint Smith speaks about the importance of young people using their voice to speak up about the world around them.

ART BY CIBO

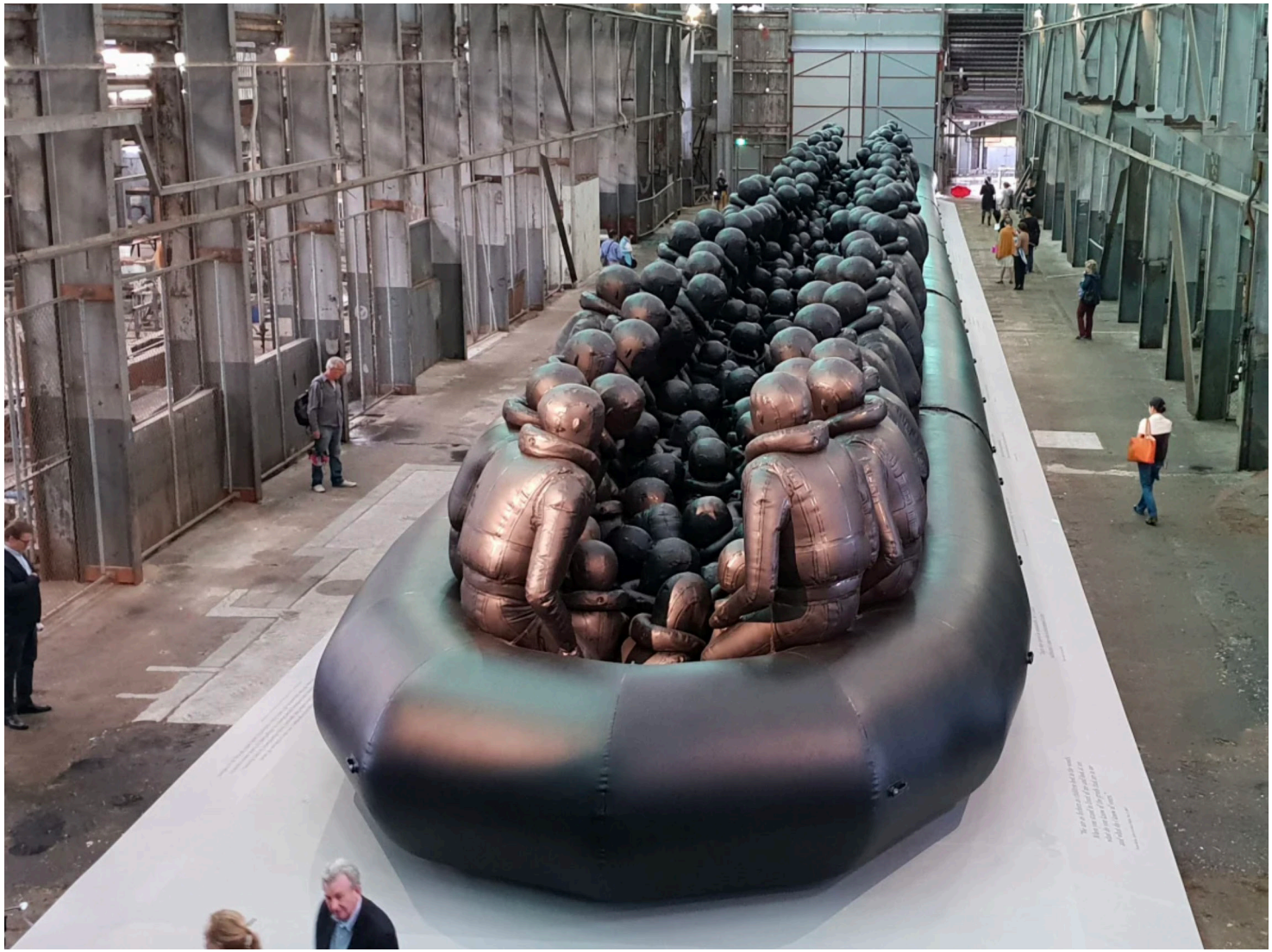
Text on Cibo work: “Caprese: pride of Italy”
Text on original graffiti: “CasaPound [Italian neo-fascist organization]: sword and shield of Italy”

Source: Ephrat Livni, “An Italian street artist is transforming fascist graffiti into food,” Quartz, 12 October 2018, **https://qz.com/quartzy/1421041/an-italian-street-artist-is-transforming-fascist-graffiti-into-food.**

ART BY CIBO

Source: (Tosscraft), "Street Artist CIBO use food to spread tasty values," Reddit, 14 February 2022, **https://www.reddit.com/r/streetartutopia/comments/ssl28a/street_artist_cibo_use_food_to_spread_tasty_values/?rdt=42067**.

ART BY AI WEIWEI



Law of the Journey, 2017

Source: Shannon Connellan, "Ai Weiwei makes bold statement about the refugee crisis with giant inflatable boat," Mashable, 13 March 2018, **https://mashable.com/article/ai-weiwei-biennale-of-sydney**.

ART BY AI WEIWEI

Surveillance Camera, 2010

Source: Ai Weiwei, "Surveillance Camera," Sculpture, 2010 (Royal Academy of Arts, London), **https://www.artsy.net/artwork/ai-weiwei-surveillance-camera-13**.

LESSON 10: LISTEN FOR DANGEROUS WORDS

PAY ATTENTION TO LANGUAGE

> Listen for dangerous words. Be alert to the use of the words *extremism* and *terrorism*. Be alive to the fatal notions of *emergency* and *exception*. Be angry about the treacherous use of patriotic vocabulary."
>
> *On Tyranny,* Chapter 17 (p. 99)

OVERVIEW

Content Level	Ages 14-18 (Grades 9-12)
Time	50 Minutes

Description	This lesson is designed to fit into one class period. Teachers should make adjustments as needed to meet the needs of their students. The lesson includes:
	• Preparatory Homework Assignment
	• 2 Activities
	  • Small group research on and presentation of a "dangerous word"
	  • Analysis of a historical speech that includes "dangerous words" (in pairs)
	• Reflection and Exit Card Prompts

Guiding Questions	• What are dangerous words? How can we identify them? • What are the potential risks of using dangerous words? • How can we avoid using dangerous words?
Learning Objectives	At the end of this lesson, students will be able to: • Identify some dangerous words and consider their usage in contemporary media. • Detect the use of dangerous words in political speech. • Analyze the impact of harmful language on individuals and groups.

Materials	• **Google Slides deck** (optional)
	• Student Handouts (also available digitally via **Google Docs**)
	  • **What are Dangerous Words?**
	  • **Analyzing Dangerous Words**
	  • **Historical Speeches**
	• Index cards or small slips of paper

Common Core Standards *Learn more at **corestandards.org**.*	Reading: Informational Text • CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.2 • CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.4 • CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.6 History/Social Studies • CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.4 Speaking & Listening • CCSS.ELA-Literacy.SL.3 • CCSS.ELA-Literacy.SL.4
Social Justice Standards *These standards were created by Learning for Justice. Learn more at **bit.ly/LFJ-standards**.*	Diversity • DI.9-12.9 • DI.9-12.10 Justice • JU.9-12.11 • JU.9-12.13 Action • AC.9-12.18 • AC.9-12.19

INTRODUCTION

In his book *On Tyranny: Twenty Lessons from the Twentieth Century*, Historian and Yale University Professor Timothy Snyder offers practical actions that individuals can take to help stop the spread of authoritarianism. One of the book's lessons, "Listen for dangerous words," encourages individuals to maintain vigilance regarding loaded language and its use among those in positions of power. Snyder states that authoritarian leaders use emotionally charged and manipulative language to incite compliance, fear, and division.

By examining the historical use of dangerous words and analyzing their significance, students can learn how to spot manipulative language today and ensure that its use does not undermine democratic institutions.

"Listen for Dangerous Words" is Chapter 17 in *On Tyranny*, pages 99-102.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

This lesson was written by Daniel Bal with support from Woven Teaching. We are very grateful for his contributions to *Defending Democracy*. For more information about Daniel, see Appendix, p. **212**.

FOCUS ON HUMAN RIGHTS

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The activities in this lesson connect directly to several UDHR articles, including:

- **Article 1**: Right to equality, dignity, and respect.
- **Article 2**: Right to freedom from discrimination.
- **Article 3**: Right to life, freedom, and safety.

ACTIVITIES

PREPARATORY HOMEWORK: WHAT ARE DANGEROUS WORDS?

Students will explore different types of words and how they shape perceptions and emotions.

Materials

- Student Handout: What are Dangerous Words? (**Handout A**)

Procedure

1. Distribute one copy of What are Dangerous Words? (**Handout A**) to each student. Explain that they should:
   a. Provide an unbiased definition for the word.
   b. Write the implied meaning of the world.
   c. Consider why this word might be "dangerous."

   You may wish to model the activity by doing one together as a class.

   *For possible responses, see p. **119**.*

4. At the beginning of the next class session, briefly go through the worksheet to ensure understanding, asking for volunteers to share their answers. Ask: *Why does word choice matter? How might word choice affect our perception of someone or something?*

WHAT ARE DANGEROUS WORDS? – POSSIBLE RESPONSES

Word or phrase	What is the unbiased definition or meaning of this word/phrase?	What does this word/ phrase add to the unbiased meaning?	How is this a "dangerous word"?
illegitimate baby	*a baby born to a mother who is not legally married*	*makes it seem like this baby/person is less valid than other babies born to married women*	*reinforces the idea of "traditional" families and delegitimizes people and families who fall outside of that idea*
slut	*a woman who has sex often or with multiple partners*	*adds a moral judgment to a person's behavior; implies that behavior is wrong*	*reinforces the belief that women should remain "pure" or the idea that it is unacceptable for women to engage in sexual activity unless in a committed relationship*
they *(plural; referring to people other than the speaker and/or audience)*	*a pronoun which refers to a group of people*	*often used to imply that another group is different from the speaker and/or the audience*	*can promote generalizations and division; supports an "us vs. them" mentality*
antifa	*anti-fascist; a person who is against fascism*	*implies that a person/ group is violent or destructive (in current usage in American media)*	*positions being against fascism as something that is inherently wrong or dangerous*
illegal *(referring to a migrant)*	*a foreign person living in a country without official permission to do so*	*makes it seem like the person is dangerous or prone to criminality; labels an individual rather than the actions they have taken*	*can lead to increased discrimination or persecution by dehumanizing migrants and perceiving them as a threat*

1 ANALYZING DANGEROUS WORDS *20 MINUTES*

Students will identify and analyze "dangerous words," working in groups to create a poster or digital graphic.

Materials

- **Google Slides deck** (optional)
- Student Handout: Analyzing Dangerous Words – Group Instructions (**Handout B**)
- Computer/internet access for students
- Poster board and/or access to Google Slides, Canva, or a similar program

Procedure

1. Ask students to think about the language they see in the media and online. Ask: *How can words be dangerous?* As part of the discussion, they should provide examples of dangerous words, recalling the words they came up with as part of their homework assignment.

2. Read the following excerpts from *On Tyranny* by Timothy Snyder:

   "Listen for dangerous words. Be alert to the use of the words extremism *and* terrorism*. Be alive to the fatal notions of* emergency *and* exception*. Be angry about the treacherous use of patriotic vocabulary"* (p. 99).

   *"*Extremism *certainly sounds bad, and governments often try to make it sound worse by using the word* terrorism *in the same sentence. But the word has little meaning. There is no doctrine called* extremism*. When tyrants speak of* extremists*, they just mean people who are not in the mainstream—as the tyrants themselves are defining that mainstream at that particular moment. Dissidents of the twentieth century, whether they were resisting fascism or communism, were called* extremists*. Modern authoritarian regimes, such as Russia, use laws on* extremism *to punish those who criticize their policies. In this way the notion of* extremism *comes to mean virtually everything except what is, in fact, extreme: tyranny"* (101-102).

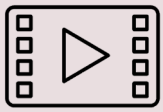
   Ask a few students to restate the idea in their own words.

3. Break students up into partners or small groups, depending on the class size. Distribute project instructions to each group (**Handout B**). Explain that they will work together to analyze the use of a dangerous word in the media, creating a poster to share in the classroom or a slide deck or other graphic to share with their classmates on Google Classroom, Padlet, or another digital bulletin board. Groups should:
   a. Designate a recorder (to take notes on the group's discussion), a creative director (to lead the project's artistic design), and a reporter (to report back to the class).
   b. Choose a dangerous word (or the teacher can assign one). Ensure no words are repeated.
   c. Provide a neutral or less emotive alternative to the dangerous word.
   d. Find the dangerous word used in the media.
      Note: One way for students to find the word in the media is by searching the word on Google and clicking the "News" section of the search results.
   e. Identify what the dangerous word is doing in their example.
      - What emotions is it evoking in this context?
      - How would replacing the word/phrase with a more neutral term alter the meaning of the piece?
      - What does this tell us about this particular news source or journalist?
      - Why is it important for us to recognize dangerous words in the media?

4. Bring the class together and ask each group to quickly share their findings.

5. Time permitting (or for homework), instruct students to review other groups' work on the digital bulletin board or as a gallery walk, commenting and adding their perspective to at least two posters/slide decks other than their own.

TIMOTHY SNYDER SPEAKS: *ON TYRANNY*



Timothy Snyder's **YouTube channel** includes a **video** (6:34) on this and each of the other 19 points in *On Tyranny*. If you have time to do so, you may wish to include this video in the lesson with the following discussion questions:

- What does Snyder mean when he says, "When we listen for dangerous words, when we learn from history and from our own history what words actually mean, we can get out a little bit ahead and stop the worst things from happening"?
- How is the notion of being "stabbed in the back" used in Snyder's example? How can this phrase be used by authoritarian leaders?

*Technology-free classroom? A transcript for this video is available via **Google Docs**.*

2 DANGEROUS WORDS IN HISTORY *25 MINUTES*

Students will learn to recognize and understand the meaning of dangerous words by analyzing a historical speech in pairs.

Materials

- **Google Slides deck** (optional)
- Student Handouts
  - » Historical Speech (**Handout C**)
    - **Mao Zedong (1949)**
    - **Joseph McCarthy (1950)**
    - **George W. Bush (2002)**
    - **Muammar Gaddafi (2011)**
    - **Viktor Orbán (2024)**
  - » Language Analysis worksheet (**Handout D**)

Procedure

1. Preparation: Depending on the speech/reading level of the class, consider assigning the speech ahead of time. Doing so could provide additional time to focus on the worksheet and discussion questions during class time.

2. Begin by explaining that some dangerous words are not necessarily dangerous all the time. Context matters. Today, students will look at historical speeches and see how some dangerous words are used in context.

3. Distribute a Historical Speech (**Handout C**) and a Language Analysis worksheet (**Handout D**) to each student.

4. Instruct students to work in pairs to read the speech and complete the handout, offering alternative language for the bolded and underlined words/phrases and making informed assumptions about the speaker's intent. In their responses, students should consider how word choice can change the meaning/intention of the speech.

TEACHING TIP

The lesson includes speeches that have been chosen for their historical significance and/or impact. Should you wish to utilize additional speeches geared toward a specific historical event or geographic location, some helpful websites are:

- **Great Speeches Collection** (The History Place)
- **Speeches and Audio** (History.com)
- **Online Speech Bank** (American Rhetoric)
- **Research Our Records** (US National Archives)

5. Discuss how the speech gets its meaning from the use of dangerous words. Consider the following questions (specific answers will differ depending on the chosen speech):
    - How do the words/phrases influence the audience's view of the speaker's message?
    - What biases are reflected in the language?
    - How does the language appeal to specific emotions?
    - What is the effect of the language?
    - How might the language impact different audiences?

3 CLOSING: EXIT CARD *5 MINUTES*

Students will complete an exit card, reflecting on the impact of dangerous words.

Materials

- **Google Slides deck** (optional)
- Index cards or small slips of paper

Procedure

1. Lead a closing discussion using the following questions as a guide. To determine understanding/student progress, some of the questions are similar to those in the opening discussion. Considering the universal implications rather than focusing on a specific speech will broaden the discussion:
    - What makes dangerous words dangerous?
    - Why are these words used?
    - How do dangerous words differ depending on the audience (e.g., culture, geographic location, or social group)?
    - How can these words influence the public?

2. Distribute an "exit card" (index card) to each student. Instruct students to answer the following questions on their card:
    - Why is it important to avoid using dangerous words?
    - Why is it important to be vigilant in spotting dangerous words?

3. You may wish to begin the next class session by reading some of the student responses (anonymously) or by answering questions they shared.

RESOURCES

Woven Teaching

Human Rights Education
woventeaching.org/human-rights-education

Learn more about Human Rights Education, a pedagogy rooted in advancing human rights through teaching that promotes cooperation, respect, and the dignity of all people.

Universal Declaration of Human Rights
woventeaching.org/udhr

From this page, students can access information about the history of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, as well as full text and student versions of the document.

Timothy Snyder

On Tyranny: Twenty Lessons from the Twentieth Century
New York: Tim Duggan Books, 2017

The framework created by Professor Timothy Snyder in *On Tyranny: Twenty Lessons from the Twentieth Century* provides the basis for the *Defending Democracy* curriculum.

Lesson 17: Listen for Dangerous Words
youtu.be/znVmAeYV1vM

In 2021, Timothy Snyder created a series of videos about *On Tyranny*, providing an updated perspective on the book's lessons.

Activities

Dangerous Speech Project
dangerousspeech.org

The Dangerous Speech Project is "a nonpartisan, nonprofit research team studying dangerous speech." Their work focuses on countering speech that could lead to violence, while still protecting the right to freedom of expression.

HANDOUT WHAT ARE DANGEROUS WORDS?

Dangerous words are words with strong emotional, social, or cultural associations that can incite hatred, provoke conflict, or lead to other negative consequences when used inappropriately. Dangerous language includes language that…

- Creates scapegoats (a person or group blamed for wrongdoings).
- Dehumanizes people (compares them to animals, says that they are diseased, etc.).
- Turns a group of people against another, insinuating that one is better than the other.
- Is overly violent or suggests that entire groups of people are violent.

Note: This is not a comprehensive list. There are many other types of dangerous language.

Instructions
Complete the worksheet below by writing:

1. The *unbiased* definition or meaning of a word or phrase
2. The implied (biased) meaning of the word
3. How the word could be "dangerous." In the last row, complete the handout with your own "dangerous word" that you've heard online or in the media.

Note: If you are unsure of its meaning, you may use the internet to find the definition of a term.

Word or phrase	What is the unbiased definition or meaning of this word/phrase?	What does this word/ phrase add to the unbiased meaning?	How is this a "dangerous word"?
illegitimate baby			
slut			
they *(plural; referring to people other than the speaker and/ or audience)*			
antifa			
illegal *(referring to a migrant)*			

HANDOUT ANALYZING DANGEROUS WORDS – GROUP ASSIGNMENT

"Be alert to the use of the words extremism *and* terrorism*. Be alive to the fatal notions of* emergency *and* exception*. Be angry about the treacherous use of patriotic vocabulary."*

– *On Tyranny* by Timothy Snyder

Instructions

The use of dangerous words—words with strong emotional, social, or cultural associations that evoke an intense reaction—can often shape perceptions, reinforce biases, or generate negative opinions. The ability to identify such words can give us a clearer understanding and allow us to evaluate the language for its underlying message and the motivation of the speaker/writer.

To better understand the impact of dangerous words, your group will create a slide deck or poster about one dangerous word and share it with your classmates.

1. **Designate roles:** Choose a recorder (to take notes on the group's discussion), a creative director (to lead the project's artist design), and a reporter (to report back to the class).

2. **Choose a dangerous word.** You may use one from the list below, or choose your own dangerous word.
   - terrorist
   - extremist
   - radical
   - illegal (referring to migrant)
   - bureaucrat
   - fascist
   - traitor
   - patriot
   - invasion
   - antifa

3. **Provide a neutral counterpart:** Identify the word's neutral (unbiased) counterpart.

4. **Find the word in media:** Locate a contemporary use of the word or phrase in the media today (e.g., in a newspaper article, speech, advertisement, etc.).

5. **Identify what the dangerous word is doing in your example:**
   - What emotions does the word/phrase evoke based on its context?
   - How do the dangerous word and its neutral counterpart differ? How would replacing the word/phrase with its neutral counterpart alter the meaning?
   - What does the use of the dangerous word tell us about your source?
   - Does the dangerous word target anyone or any group?
   - How might different groups react to the dangerous word?

6. **Share your work:** Add your poster or slide deck to the wall or digital bulletin board to share with your classmates.

HANDOUT HISTORICAL SPEECH: MAO ZEDONG

Mao Zedong (1893-1976) was a founder of the People's Republic of China and the chairman of the Chinese Communist Party. He gave this speech at the first meeting of the top political advisory body of the People's Republic of China, the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference. The session marked the end of the Chinese Civil War and marked the beginning of communist rule in China.

The Chinese People Have Stood Up!
September 21, 1949

It is because we have defeated the reactionary Kuomintang government backed by U.S. imperialism that this great unity of the whole people has been achieved. In a little more than three years the heroic Chinese People's Liberation Army, an army such as the world has seldom seen, crushed all the offensives launched by the several million troops of the U.S.-supported reactionary Kuomintang government and turned to the counter-offensive and the offensive. At present the field armies of the People's Liberation Army, several million strong, have pushed the war to areas near Taiwan, Kwangtung, Kwangsi, Kweichow, Szechuan and Sinkiang, and the great majority of the Chinese people have won liberation. In a little more than three years the people of the whole country have closed their ranks, rallied to support the People's Liberation Army, fought the enemy and won basic victory. And it is on this foundation that the present People's Political Consultative Conference is convened.

Our conference is called the Political Consultative Conference because some three years ago we held a Political Consultative Conference with Chiang Kai-shek's Kuomintang. The results of that conference were **1) sabotaged** by Chiang Kai-shek's Kuomintang and its accomplices; nevertheless, the conference left an indelible impression on the people. [...]

The only gain from that conference was the profound lesson it taught the people that there is absolutely no room for compromise with Chiang Kai-shek's Kuomintang, the running dog of imperialism, and its accomplices – overthrow these **2) enemies** or be oppressed and **3) slaughtered** by them, either one or the other, there is no other choice. [...]

Fellow Delegates, we are all convinced that our work will go down in the history of mankind, demonstrating that the Chinese people, comprising one quarter of humanity, have now stood up. The Chinese have always been a great, courageous and industrious nation; it is only in modern times that they have fallen behind. And that was due entirely to oppression and **4) exploitation** by foreign imperialism and domestic reactionary governments. [...]

We have closed our ranks and defeated both domestic and **5) foreign oppressors** through the People's War of Liberation and the great people's revolution, and now we are proclaiming the founding of the People's Republic of China. From now on our nation will belong to the community of the peace-loving and freedom-loving nations of the world and work courageously and industriously to foster its own civilization and well-being and at the same time to promote world peace and freedom. Ours will no longer be a nation subject to insult and **6) humiliation**. We have stood up. Our revolution has won the sympathy and acclaim of the people of all countries. We have friends all over the world.

Our revolutionary work is not completed, the People's War of Liberation and the people's revolutionary movement are still forging ahead, and we must keep up our efforts. The imperialists and the **7) <u>domestic reactionaries</u>** will certainly not take their defeat lying down; they will fight to the last ditch. After there is peace and order throughout the country, they are sure to engage in sabotage and create disturbances by one means or another and every day and every minute they will try to stage a come-back. This is inevitable and beyond all doubt, and under no circumstances must we relax our vigilance…

The heroes of the people who laid down their lives in the People's War of Liberation and the people's revolution shall live forever in our memory!

Hail the victory of the People's War of Liberation and the people's revolution!

Hail the founding of the People's Republic of China!

Hail the triumph of the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference!

Notes

Source: "The Chinese People Have Stood Up! 1949," USC US-China Institute, **https://china.usc.edu/Mao-declares-founding-of-peoples-republic-of-china-chinese-people-have-stood-up**.

HANDOUT HISTORICAL SPEECH: JOSEPH MCCARTHY

Joseph McCarthy (1908-1957) was a Republican US Senator from Wisconsin. He gave this speech in 1950 in response to what he believed was the Truman administration's "traitorous" harboring of Communists in government positions. He believed that numerous communists had infiltrated the US government and other influential institutions.

Wheeling Speech
February 9, 1950

Five years after a world war has been won, men's hearts should anticipate a long peace—and men's minds should be free from the heavy weight that comes with war. But this is not such a period—for this is not a period of peace. This is a time of "the cold war." [...]

There is still a hope for peace if we finally decide that no longer can we safely blind our eyes and close our ears to those facts which are shaping up more and more clearly [...] and that is that we are now engaged in a **1) show-down fight** [...] not the usual war between nations for land areas or other material gains, but a war between two diametrically opposed ideologies.

The great difference between our western Christian world and the atheistic Communist world is not political, gentlemen, it is moral. For instance, the Marxian idea of confiscating the land and factories and running the entire economy as a single enterprise is momentous. Likewise, Lenin's invention of the one-party police state as a way to make Marx's idea work is hardly less momentous. [...]

The real, basic difference, however, lies in **2) the religion of immoralism** [...] This religion of immoralism will more deeply wound and damage mankind than any conceivable economic or political system. [...]

Today we are engaged in a final, all-out battle between communistic atheism and Christianity. The modern champions of communism have selected this as the time, and ladies and gentlemen, the chips are down—they are truly down. [...]

Here is what [Stalin] said—not back in 1928, not before the war, not during the war—but 2 years after the last war was ended: "To think that the Communist revolution can be carried out peacefully, within the framework of a Christian democracy, means one has either gone out of one's mind and lost all normal understanding, or has grossly and openly repudiated the Communist revolution." [...]

Unless we face this fact, we shall pay the price that must be paid by those who wait too long. Six years ago, [...] there was within the Soviet orbit, 180,000,000 people. Lined up on the antitotalitarian side there were in the world at that time, roughly 1,625,000,000 people. Today, only six years later, there are 800,000,000 people under the **3) absolute domination** of Soviet Russia—an increase of over 400 percent. On our side, the figure has shrunk to around 500,000,000. In other words, in less than six years, the odds have changed from 9 to 1 in our favor to 8 to 5 against us.

This indicates the swiftness of the tempo of Communist victories and American defeats in the cold war. As one of our outstanding historical figures once said, "When a great democracy is destroyed, it will not be from enemies from without, but rather because of **4) enemies from within**." [...]

The reason why we find ourselves in a position of impotency is not because our only powerful potential enemy has sent men to invade our shores [...] but rather because of the **5) traitorous** actions of those who have been treated so well by this Nation. It has not been the less fortunate, or members of minority groups who have been traitorous to this Nation, but rather those who have had all the benefits that the wealthiest Nation on earth has had to offer [...] the finest homes, the finest college education and the finest jobs in government we can give.

This is glaringly true in the State Department. There the bright young men who are **6) born with silver spoons in their mouths** are the ones who have been most traitorous [...]

As you know, very recently the Secretary of State proclaimed his loyalty to a man guilty of what has always been considered as the most abominable of all crimes—being a traitor to the people who gave him a position of great trust—high treason. . . .

[The Secretary of State] has lighted the spark which is resulting in a moral uprising and will end only when the whole **7) sorry mess of twisted, warped thinkers** are swept from the national scene so that we may have a new birth of honesty and decency in government.

Notes

Source: "Joseph McCarthy, Wheeling Speech, West Virginia, February 9, 1950," Professor Ellen Herman, Department of History, University of Oregon, **https://pages.uoregon.edu/eherman/teaching/texts/McCarthy_Wheeling_Speech.pdf**.

HANDOUT HISTORICAL SPEECH: GEORGE W. BUSH

George W. Bush (b. 1946) was the president of the United States from 2001-2008. He delivered this speech during the annual "State of the Union" address before Congress in January 2002, four months after the September 11 attacks. In this speech, he identified North Korea, Iran, and Iraq as the "axis of evil"–states that were allegedly supporting terrorist groups and developing weapons of mass destruction.

State of the Union Address
January 29, 2002

We last met in an hour of shock and suffering. In four short months, our nation has comforted the victims, begun to rebuild New York and the Pentagon, rallied a great coalition, captured, arrested, and **1) rid the world** of thousands of terrorists, destroyed Afghanistan's terrorist training camps, saved a people from starvation, and freed a country from brutal oppression.

The American flag flies again over our embassy in Kabul. Terrorists who once occupied Afghanistan now occupy cells at Guantanamo Bay. And terrorist leaders who urged followers to sacrifice their lives are running for their own. [...]

Our progress is a tribute to the spirit of the Afghan people, to the resolve of our coalition, and to the might of the United States military. [...] The men and women of our Armed Forces have delivered a message now clear to every enemy of the United States: Even 7,000 miles away, across oceans and continents, on mountaintops and in caves–you will not escape the justice of this nation. [...]

Our cause is just, and it continues. Our discoveries in Afghanistan confirmed our worst fears, and showed us the true scope of the task ahead. We have seen the depth of our enemies' hatred in videos, where they laugh about the loss of innocent life. And the depth of their hatred is equaled by the **2) madness** of the destruction they design. We have found diagrams of American nuclear power plants and public water facilities, detailed instructions for making chemical weapons, surveillance maps of American cities, and thorough descriptions of landmarks in America and throughout the world.

What we have found in Afghanistan confirms that, far from ending there, our **3) war against terror** is only beginning. Most of the 19 men who hijacked planes on September the 11th were trained in Afghanistan's camps, and so were tens of thousands of others. Thousands of **4) dangerous killers**, schooled in the methods of murder, often supported by outlaw regimes, are now spread throughout the world like ticking time bombs, set to go off without warning. [...]

My hope is that all nations will heed our call, and eliminate the terrorist **5) parasites** who threaten their countries and our own. Many nations are acting forcefully. [...]

But some governments will be timid in the face of terror. And make no mistake about it: If they do not act, America will.

Our second goal is to prevent regimes that sponsor terror from threatening America or our friends and allies with weapons of mass destruction. Some of these regimes have been pretty quiet since September the 11th. But we know their true nature. North Korea is a regime arming with missiles and weapons of mass destruction, while starving its citizens.

Iran aggressively pursues these weapons and exports terror, while an unelected few repress the Iranian people's hope for freedom.

Iraq continues to flaunt its hostility toward America and to support terror. The Iraqi regime has plotted to develop anthrax, and nerve gas, and nuclear weapons for over a decade. This is a regime that has already used poison gas to murder thousands of its own citizens–leaving the bodies of mothers huddled over their dead children. This is a regime that agreed to international inspections–then kicked out the inspectors. This is a regime that has something to hide from the **6) civilized world**.

States like these, and their terrorist allies, constitute an **7) axis of evil**, arming to threaten the peace of the world. By seeking weapons of mass destruction, these regimes pose a grave and growing danger. They could provide these arms to terrorists, giving them the means to match their hatred. They could attack our allies or attempt to blackmail the United States. In any of these cases, the price of indifference would be catastrophic.

We will work closely with our coalition to deny terrorists and their state sponsors the materials, technology, and expertise to make and deliver weapons of mass destruction. We will develop and deploy effective missile defenses to protect America and our allies from sudden attack. And all nations should know: America will do what is necessary to ensure our nation's security. [...]

Notes

Source: "President Delivers State of the Union Address," The White House - President George W. Bush, **https://georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov/news/releases/2002/01/20020129-11.html**.

HANDOUT HISTORICAL SPEECH: MUAMMAR GADDAFI

Muammar Gaddafi (1942-2011) was the leader of Libya from 1969 until his assassination by NATO-allied rebel forces in 2011.[1] In this TV broadcast during the Libyan Civil War, Gaddafi urged his supporters to fight the rebel groups attempting to remove him from power.

Television Broadcast
August 24, 2011

They are co-ordinating with the tribes in order to kick out their tribes from the streets of Tripoli, which were handed over to the **1) rats of NATO**.

People of Tripoli, who are not from those tribes, your mission is the same - i.e., to **2) purge** your areas, to purge the districts of the city of Tripoli. To the youth of Tajoura, Souq al-Jumaa, it is a possibility that the rats are nesting there with the help of some sick people such as [Sheikh al-Sadiq] al-Ghiryani who was present in that area, that dirty Ghiryani [words indistinct but the gist is insulting Ghiryani's direct family lineage].

They were nesting there, taking orders from infidels and **3) colonialists** and from the French embassy in Tripoli. They wanted to destroy Tajoura and Souq al-Jumaa. Let all the youth, women and free men march on those areas to purge them from the rats.

The tribes are marching from several regions: from Bani Walid, Tarhouna, Fizzan, Sabha, Jufara, from the mountain, tribes are marching in from outside Tripoli. They are inside the city, they have entered it and are now purging it with the help of its residents.

[The rebels want to] pillage and torch the city of Tripoli. They want to destroy it. They do not care if you **4) live miserably in darkness**. They will take away your petroleum and destroy Libya. They do not care [words indistinct]. The infidels have entered your mosques [words indistinct].

Let everyone converge on Tripoli: its original residents, the tribes taking residence there, the tribes coming in from outside of it, the youth, the elderly, the women, the armed combat formations. All of you, sweep into Tripoli and flush it out and **5) exterminate** the traitors, infidels and rats. [words indistinct]

They are **6) slaughtering** you, disfiguring your corpses, torturing you [words indistinct]. Why do you let them torture? They came in with the guns and tanks to topple Tripoli over your heads. The army did not go into buildings. They were the ones who entrenched themselves with families in their houses. They were the ones to have stormed into flats. So, you should attack them. Take them away from the families whose homes were attacked.

I am asking you to come on pick up your courage, have courage and come out to the streets. I would like to salute al-Rai TV because of this chance to talk since al-Jamahiriya TV was bombed.

[1] NATO, or the North Atlantic Treaty Organization, is a military alliance of 32 European and North American countries.

I came out undercover from my home in Tripoli without people seeing me and I found young people on the streets. To be honest, I did not feel like Tripoli had fallen or that some had marched into it.

I consider this a simple thing, just an issue of riot control. Counter-terrorism units are currently carrying out their duties and rounding up **7) criminals**. [Words indistinct]. I have met revolutionary young people carrying AK-47s. That was amazing. I would like to salute them and salute their courage.

Forward.

Notes

Source: "Full text: Gaddafi broadcast," BBC News, 24 August 2011, **https://www.bbc.com/news/world-africa-14648535**.

HANDOUT HISTORICAL SPEECH: VIKTOR ORBÁN

Viktor Orbán (b. 1963) is the prime minister of Hungary. Orbán was elected prime minister in 2010, and in the years since, the Hungarian government has utilized an increasing number of authoritarian practices. Orbán gave this speech in advance of the European Parliament election of 2024. In it, he supports a ceasefire between Russia and Ukraine (which would allow Russia to retain the territories it has occupied).

"Peace March" Speech
June 1, 2024

My Friends,

Today Europe is preparing for war. Every day another section of the road to hell is handed over. Every day we are besieged with the demand for hundreds of billions of euros for Ukraine, the deployment of nuclear weapons in the middle of Europe, and the conscription of our sons into a foreign army: into a NATO mission in Ukraine, into European military units sent to Ukraine. My Friends, it seems that the pro-war train has no brakes and the driver has gone mad. In the European elections what we are committing to is nothing less than stopping this train. We must pull the emergency cord, so that at least those who want to get off can do so, and stay out of the war. The Hungarian government knows how to do this. We know how to stay out of deadly situations.[...] And we also rescued Hungarian children from the hands of **1) dangerous, repugnant gender activists**. [...] No migration! No gender! No war! [...]

We are the **2) only pro-peace government** in the EU. [...]

We must face up to reality: if the Left wins, it will only be a matter of time before the war catches up with us. Those who support the war have placed themselves outside the bounds of common sense. Supporters of the war have become **3) intoxicated**. They want to defeat Russia, as was attempted in the First and Second World Wars. They are even ready to clash with the whole of the East. They think that they will win this war. But the intoxication of war is like a drug: those who are in its grip accept no personal responsibility for anything. They listen to no one. They step over you. They feel no remorse. They care nothing for us, or for you, your life, your family, the house you have worked for, or the future that you work for every day. They **4) care nothing for the future of your children**. They cannot be convinced. And so what we must do is not convince them, but defeat them. [...]

The founding fathers of the European Union were right: Europe cannot endure another war. This was why the European Union was created. Before the First World War, Europe was master of the world. After the Second World War, it was no longer master of itself, occupied by foreign empires in the West and the East. Now **5) we play second fiddle**. As things stand, after another war Europe will not even be in the orchestra setting the rhythm of the world – if there is any orchestra at all. This is even truer for Hungary: in war, we have nothing to gain and everything to lose. [...]

Many people believe that evil does not exist. But evil is behind the world wars. We must not give in to it! The time for exorcism has come. Either we win or they win. There is no third way – only a third world war. [...]

Europe has never seen an election like this one. On election day, guns will be blazing in a neighbouring country. Great wars do not come out of nowhere. Economic crisis, shortage of raw materials, arms competition, pandemics, false prophets, assassination attempts, **6) sinister shadows all around us**. This is how it starts. There have been generations on this earth – our grandparents and great-grandparents – whose worst nightmares became reality. We observe the signs. We see the writing on the wall. Hungarians know the nature of war. They know that a war always ends differently from the way it was first imagined. This is why today millions of young Europeans lie in mass graves. This is why there are not enough Europeans, why there are not enough European children. War kills. Someone dies with a gun in his hands. Someone dies while fleeing. Someone dies under bombardment. Someone dies in an enemy's prison. Someone dies in a pandemic. Someone dies of starvation. Someone is tortured. Someone is raped. Someone is taken into slavery. The lines of graves are endless. [...]

The only antidote to war is peace: to stay out of the war and maintain Hungary as an island of peace. This is our mission. [...]

God above us all, **7) Hungary before all else**! Go Hungary, go Hungarians!

Notes

Source: Viktor Orbán, "Speech by Prime Minister Victor Orbán at the "Peace March," About Hungary, 1 June 2024, **https://abouthungary.hu/speeches-and-remarks/speech-by-prime-minister-victor-orban-at-the-peace-march**.

HANDOUT LANGUAGE ANALYSIS

Speaker: _____

Word	Neutral alternative	Why do you think the speaker chose this word? What emotions were they trying to evoke?
1)		
2)		
3)		
4)		
5)		
6)		
7)		
Why is it important to recognize dangerous words from political leaders and the media? What might this tell us about the state of democracy or human rights in a country?		

LESSON 11: CONTRIBUTE TO GOOD CAUSES

SUPPORT CIVIL SOCIETY

> Contribute to good causes. Be active in organizations, political or not, that express your own view of life. Pick a charity or two and set up autopay. Then you will have made a free choice that supports civil society and helps others to do good."
>
> *On Tyranny,* Chapter 15 (p. 92)

OVERVIEW

Content Level	Ages 14-18 (Grades 9-12)
Time	50 Minutes

Description	This lesson is designed to fit into one class period. Teachers should make adjustments as needed to meet the needs of their students. The lesson includes:
	• Preparatory Homework Assignment
	• 4 Activities
	  • All-class video review and discussion about the role of civic organizations and nonprofits
	  • All-class video review and discussion about a historical case study related to freedom of association
	  • Small group analysis of real campaigns by nonprofit organizations
	  • Individual image analysis and written reflection
	• 2 Extension Activities

Guiding Questions	• How do civic organizations protect against authoritarian behaviors and governments? • What is the connection between supporting civic organizations and upholding democracy? • How can a young person "contribute to good causes"?
Learning Objectives	At the end of this lesson, students will be able to: • Recognize the important role of civil society organizations in upholding democracy. • Explain the importance of freedom of association.

Materials	• **Google Slides deck** (optional)
	• Image: Volunteer cartoon (see p. **142**)
	• Student Handouts (also available digitally via **Google Docs**)
	  » **Case Studies: Nonprofit Campaigns**
	  » **Campaign worksheet**
	• Videos
	  » "**Constitution Explained: Freedom of Assembly and Petition**" (2:43, iCivics)
	  » "**Lesson 15: Contribute to Good Causes**" (5:42, Timothy Snyder)
	  » "**NAACP v. State of Alabama**" (1:50, Quimbee)
	• Computer/internet access for small groups
	• Notebooks/journals

Common Core Standards *Learn more at* ***corestandards.org****.*	Speaking & Listening • CCSS.ELA-Literacy.SL.1 History/Social Studies • CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.2	Language • CCSS.ELA-Literacy.L.1 • CCSS.ELA-Literacy.L.6
Social Justice Standards *These standards were created by Learning for Justice. Learn more at* ***bit.ly/LFJ-standards****.*	Diversity • DI.9-12.6 • DI.9-12.9 Justice • JU.9-12.15	Action • AC.9-12.17 • AC.9-12.20

INTRODUCTION

In his book *On Tyranny: Twenty Lessons from the Twentieth Century*, Historian and Yale University Professor Timothy Snyder offers practical actions that individuals can take to help stop the spread of authoritarianism. One of the book's lessons, "Contribute to good causes," offers a simple but critical action to support civil society organizations that serve to protect against authoritarian behaviors and governments. This action is available to individuals because of a critical human right–freedom of association. This freedom allows these important civil society organizations to thrive. Without such a freedom, individuals cannot fully express their interest in and support of these organizations. Without such support, organizations cannot hold government and state actors accountable. Without such accountability, governments and state actors can easily violate fundamental human rights.

In this lesson, students will explore the connection between supporting and contributing to civil society organizations and upholding democracy. Specifically, they will understand that the freedom of association–the freedom to associate with others who have similar political, religious, or cultural beliefs–is antithetical to authoritarianism which is focused on making the state (i.e., government) the dominant voice and decision-making center.

"Contribute to good causes" is Chapter 15 in *On Tyranny*, pages 92-94.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

This lesson was written by Esther Hurh with support from Woven Teaching. We are very grateful for her contributions to *Defending Democracy*. For more information about Esther, see Appendix, p. **212**.

FOCUS ON HUMAN RIGHTS

Woven Teaching believes that **human rights education** is essential for students to understand and assert their own rights and to protect the rights of others. As a result, the **Universal Declaration of Human Rights** (UDHR) lies at the core of Woven Teaching's materials. The document's 30 articles outline fundamental human rights: basic rights and freedoms which every human being is entitled to, regardless of race, religion, birthplace, gender, sexual orientation, or other characteristics. Although its articles are not legally binding, the UDHR serves as a moral compass for the international community.

The activities in this lesson connect directly to several UDHR articles, including:

- **Article 12**: Right to privacy.
- **Article 20**: Right to participate in organizations and organize peaceful protests and meetings.
- **Article 29**: Right to be supported by your community and a duty to do the same.

PREPARATORY HOMEWORK: UNDERSTANDING VOCABULARY

Students will develop a shared vocabulary in preparation for the conversations about civil society and civic engagement.

Materials

- Student Handout: Key Terms – Contribute to Good Causes (**Handout A**)

Procedure

1. Distribute one copy of the Key Terms (**Handout A**) to each student. Explain that they should read the definitions for each term, then answer the related questions.

2. At the beginning of the next class session, briefly go through the worksheet to ensure understanding, asking for volunteers to share their answers.

1 CIVIL SOCIETY AND DEMOCRACY *15 MINUTES*

Students will watch a video and discuss the role of civil society as a safeguard against authoritarianism

Materials

- **Google Slides deck** (optional)
- Video: "**Lesson 15: Contribute to Good Causes**" (5:42, Timothy Snyder)
- Notebooks/journals

Procedure

1. Begin by reading aloud the following excerpt from *On Tyranny* by Timothy Snyder, then invite students to restate this idea in their own words.

   "Be active in organizations, political or not, that express your own view of life" (92).

2. Share the following information:

   Snyder believes that nonprofit organizations and other associations that uphold democratic values have an important role in a democratic society. Furthermore, our individual support of and participation in nonprofit organizations is an expression of our "own view of life" thanks to freedom of choice and participation.

3. Watch "**Lesson 15: Contribute to Good Causes**" – Snyder's explanation of this lesson (start at 1:22). Instruct students to consider the following question as they watch the video: *What does Snyder say about the role of organizations supporting democracy, and therefore our individual freedoms?*

   *Note: Technology-free classroom? A transcript for this video is available via **Google Docs**.*

4. Pause at 3:51, after Snyder says, "Civil society can do things that governments cannot do, and civil society can also make sure that governments don't do some things that governments shouldn't do." Have students quietly consider what this could mean and ask them to jot down their thoughts in their notebook. Give them at least 30 seconds to do this before resuming the video.

5. After watching the video, instruct students to share their responses to the quote, either in pairs, small groups, or as a class. Discuss the video using the following questions:

- What does “contributing to good causes” mean? Why do you think Snyder calls it “easy?” Does “easy” mean that such contributions are not important or valuable?
- How does Snyder use the word “power” in this video? How does he describe authoritarian power’s impact on people’s relationship with each other and what they care about?
- Snyder speaks of civil society’s political role. What does he mean?

Guide the discussion to focus on a deeper purpose of civic organizations: to push against authoritarian governments that wish to dictate who people can interact with and what social issues they can engage with. By supporting such organizations, we can express our authentic selves living in a democratic society and have some measure of assurance that their vigilance safeguards our democracy.

2 FREEDOM OF ASSOCIATION *15 MINUTES*

Students will learn about freedom of assembly and association, as well as the landmark US Supreme Court case, *NAACP v. State of Alabama*.

Materials

- **Google Slides deck** (optional)
- Videos
  - “**Constitution Explained: Freedom of Assembly and Petition**” (2:43, iCivics) [**Print**]
  - “**NAACP v. State of Alabama**” (1:50, Quimbee) [**Print**]

Procedure

1. Begin by showing “**Constitution Explained: Freedom of Assembly and Petition**” (starting at 2:02) for a brief description of the freedom of association.

   Note: Technology-free classroom? Transcripts for the videos in this activity are available via Google Docs. Click ‘Print’ on the Materials list to access the transcripts.

2. Share or lead a discussion, including the following points:

   In the United States, the First Amendment’s protection of free speech, assembly and petition extends to include freedom of association: the freedom to associate with others who have similar political, religious, or cultural beliefs.

   Without this freedom of association, people would–out of fear–be less willing to connect to causes important to them. They would be less willing to give donations or volunteer their time, thus jeopardizing the existence of organizations addressing social and political issues. This would give more power to the government, which would no longer need to contend with these opposing voices, and would be free to violate human rights with impunity.

   Freedom of association has been challenged, as witnessed in the 1958 US Supreme Court landmark case NAACP vs. State of Alabama.

3. Play “**NAACP v. State of Alabama**” (1:50) for a deeper explanation of the case. Engage the students in discussion with the following questions:
   - What did the State of Alabama want from the NAACP? Why?
   - What was the NAACP’s argument for not giving what the State of Alabama wanted?

TEACHING TIP

If students are not familiar with the significance of the NAACP, show “**The NAACP Legal Defense Fund**” (1:56) for a background of the NAACP Legal Defense Fund. [**Print**]

4. Share that the US Supreme Court agreed with the NAACP and ruled that the request for the membership list was unconstitutional, thus upholding the freedom of association. Ask: *What do you think would have happened if it weren't for the NAACP? How might this have affected democracy and human rights in the United States?*

5. Conclude the activity by sharing that during this time, there were few civil rights organizations in the South fighting against racial injustice. If it weren't for this decision, the fight for civil rights in the South would have looked very different. This is why supporting civic organizations–which we are able to do thanks to the freedom of association–is crucial to a democratic society.

3 CONTRIBUTING TO GOOD CAUSES *15 MINUTES*

Students will analyze real campaigns by nonprofit organizations and consider how contributing to good causes strengthens democracy.

Materials

- **Google Slides deck** (optional)
- Student Handouts
  - » Case Studies: Nonprofit Campaigns (**Handout B**)
    - **KAN-WIN Share 1 Drive**
    - **Vote Forward Writing Campaign**
  - » Campaign worksheet (**Handout C**)
- Computer/internet access for small groups

Procedure

1. Remind students that Snyder writes about giving money as an easy way to support organizations, but there are other ways to contribute. Ask students to share what other forms of contributions are available to them as young people.
   Possible responses: in-kind donations (clothing, food), money, and time and services (skills, talents)

   Ask students to share examples of when they (or someone they know) supported an organization in any of these ways.

   *Note: If students completed the Preparatory Homework assignment, ask a few students to share relevant answers from questions 2 and 3 on **Handout A**.*

2. Share that for the majority of organizations, money is at the top of their wish list of contributions. This gives them the freedom to make critical decisions on how to do the work. However, they know that individual people can make a significant and meaningful impact. Quite often, when people contribute their time and services to the organization, they not only make a difference to the organization but they also feel more connected and committed to the issue the organization is tackling. Explain to the students that they will take a look at a few unique ways that people can contribute to good causes.

3. Distribute one Nonprofit Campaign case study (**Handout B**)–either KAN-WIN Share 1 Drive or Vote Forward Writing Campaign–to each student. Working in pairs or small groups, instruct students to read their handout and answer the questions in the Campaign worksheet (**Handout C**).

4. Debrief as a class, asking a few groups to share their answers.

TEACHING TIP

Technology-free classroom? Print **this PDF** of Vote Forward's webpage, "How-to guide: Writing letters to voters with Vote Forward" in lieu of sending students to the website.

4 CLOSING: IMAGE ANALYSIS *5 MINUTES*

Students will analyze a cartoon and reflect on the importance of contributing to good causes.

Materials

- **Google Slides deck** (optional)
- Image: Volunteer cartoon [**Print**]
- Sticky notes or virtual bulletin board (e.g., Padlet)

Procedure

1. Show the cartoon image "**Community: It's not magic that helps keep all those balls in the air – it's volunteers!**" (Kneebone, February 16, 2023).

2. Instruct students to write an accompanying text based on what they learned about the importance of freedom of association and/or nonprofit organizations as critical to a healthy civil society. Students can use sticky notes and post on the board or use a virtual bulletin board (e.g., Padlet) to share their text.

Source: Simon Kneebone, "Kneebone Cartoons," Pro Bono Australia, 16 February 2023, **https://probonoaustralia.com.au/news/nfp-kneebone**.

EXTENSION ACTIVITY: CONTRIBUTING TO ELECTIONS

Students will create a list of actionable tasks they can do to support democratic elections.

Materials

- Webpage: "**Growing Voters: 18 Ways Youth Under 18 Can Contribute to Elections**" (Tufts University)
- Computer/internet access for each student

Procedure

1. Remind students that in addition to volunteering or contributing in non-political ways, all people can support democracy by contributing to elections.

2. Instruct students to navigate to Tufts University's Center for Information & Research on Civic Learning and Engagement's "**Growing Voters: 18 Ways Youth Under 18 Can Contribute to Elections**."

   *Note: Technology-free classroom? Provide **printed copies** of the webpage for students.*

3. Ask students to read the webpage and make notes about three ways that they can volunteer their own time and energy to protect free elections, even if they cannot vote yet.

4. After students have finished reading, bring the class together for a quick debrief. Ask a few volunteers to share the three tactics/activities they have chosen. To close, crowdsource ideas about how to put these ideas into action.

   For example, students have chosen "*Do research on an issue/policy you're interested in to find reliable information on the candidates' stance on the issue, and then share your viewpoint with those who can vote*," elicit suggestions from the class on how a person might go about this activity: where the might look for information, who they might talk to, etc.

EXTENSION ACTIVITY: WHAT CAN YOU CONTRIBUTE?

Students will consider the skills, resources, and joys they have to contribute to movements for social change.

Materials

- Notebooks/journals

Procedure

1. Preparation: Draw a chart with three columns on the board. Label each column with the following headers: Skills, Resources, Joys

2. Share the following information with students:

   Everyone has something to contribute to defending democracy and movements for social change. While some ways of contributing are obvious–monetary donations, for example–some are less so. Every individual has skills, abilities, or resources that could be useful.

   For example:
   - *Do you have neat penmanship?*
     You could help write signs for organizations or for rallies/protests.

- *Do you have access to a car or bicycle?*
  You could help run errands or move supplies for rallies, meetings, etc.
- *Do you have a backyard or a living room?*
  You could offer your space for meetings and other gatherings.
- *Do you have babysitting experience?*
  You could help provide childcare during meetings and rallies so that parents with young children are also able to be involved.
- *Do you like to google?*
  You could help organizations conduct research (e.g., policy research, gathering contact information gathering from websites, etc.).

3. Continue:
   Contributing time, skills, and labor to movements for social change can be hard work. In addition to having skills and resources to offer, every person has joys–things that they like to do. Supporting movements for social change is vital, but it is also important to do things that lift your spirits and bring you joy–because "you can't pour from an empty cup."

4. Instruct students to draw their own Skills/Resources/Joys chart in their notebooks and spend a few minutes filling it out. Remind them that there is nothing too small or silly to add to the chart.

5. After a few minutes, instruct students to form pairs or small groups. Each student should share a few of their notes with their partners. Move throughout the room as they share, encouraging students to add to their own charts if something a partner says sparks an idea.

6. After all students have shared with their partners, bring the class together. Ask students to share some of their skills/resources/joys or those of their partners. Record their answers on the chart on the board.

7. Close by acknowledging the wealth of collective skills, resources, and joys in the room.

RESOURCES

Woven Teaching

Human Rights Education
woventeaching.org/human-rights-education

Learn more about Human Rights Education, a pedagogy rooted in advancing human rights through teaching that promotes cooperation, respect, and the dignity of all people.

Universal Declaration of Human Rights
woventeaching.org/udhr

From this page, students can access information about the history of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, as well as full text and student versions of the document.

Timothy Snyder

On Tyranny: Twenty Lessons from the Twentieth Century
New York: Tim Duggan Books, 2017

The framework created by Professor Timothy Snyder in *On Tyranny: Twenty Lessons from the Twentieth Century* provides the basis for the *Defending Democracy* curriculum.

Lesson 15: Contribute to Good Causes
youtube.com/watch?v=hEUF5lHuXjI

In 2021, Timothy Snyder created a series of videos about *On Tyranny*, providing an updated perspective on the book's lessons.

Activities

32 Types Of Nonprofits: The Complete List
Forbes (Alana Rudder and Brette Sember, Jr., 5 June 2024)
forbes.com/advisor/business/types-nonprofits

This article explains the many types of organizations that qualify for nonprofit status.

KAN-WIN
kanwin.org

KAN-WIN is a nonprofit organization based in Chicago, Illinois that, "works to eradicate gender-based violence through comprehensive, survivor-centered services, education, and outreach to Asian American communities and beyond."

Vote Forward
votefwd.org

Vote Forward is a nonprofit organization based in Washington, DC that "empowers grassroots volunteers to send handwritten letters encouraging fellow Americans to vote."

HANDOUT KEY TERMS – CONTRIBUTE TO GOOD CAUSES

- **civil society:** groups, organizations, and institutions that contribute to the functioning of society but are not part of the government or business. Civil society includes all non-governmental groups and organizations that individuals create and join, such as religious organizations, nonprofit organizations, charities, etc.
- **civic engagement:** the act of taking action on issues of public concern. Civic engagement can include joining clubs, volunteering, advocating for changes in policy, voting, and more.
- **First Amendment:** The First Amendment to the US Constitution contains five freedoms: freedom of religion, freedom of speech, freedom of the press, freedom of assembly, and freedom of petition. Through various rulings, the US Supreme Court has interpreted these First Amendment protections to include freedom of association.
- **freedom of association:** the right for individuals to interact and organize with other people on the basis of shared interests (e.g., political parties, social clubs, religious groups, etc.)
- **nonprofit organization:** an organization which exists for public, collective, or social benefit (as opposed to an organization which exists to make money for its owners/shareholders)
- **volunteer:** to do something willingly and for free; a person who offers to do something, especially for other people or for an organization

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1. What civil society organizations are you aware of in your community?

2. Do you practice civic engagement? If so, how? If no, why not?

3. Have you ever volunteered? If so, describe your experience. If not, is there a type of volunteer work that interests you?

HANDOUT CASE STUDY: KAN-WIN'S SHARE 1 DRIVE

Instructions
Review the following information about KAN-WIN's Share 1 Drive, then complete the accompanying Campaign Worksheet.

KAN-WIN is a nonprofit organization based in Chicago, Illinois, focused on eradicating gender-based violence in Asian American communities and beyond.

Part 1: Reflections on Hope from the Executive Director

Excerpts from "Reflections on Hope from the ED" by Ji Hye Kim in KAN-WIN's annual newsletter Chin-Jung (January 2021). This was written upon reflection of the COVID-19 pandemic that started in March 2020 and anti-Asian violence throughout the year.

As the pandemic raged across the globe, it was heartbreaking to see its devastating impact on our community members, especially the elderly and the vulnerable, including survivors of domestic and sexual violence. Quarantine restrictions, increased isolation, and economic woes created a pressure cooker environment in many homes. It is no surprise that the rate of domestic violence increased by 35 to 50 percent worldwide. Shelters began reducing their capacities to ensure social distancing measures, while school and daycare closures hampered survivors' ability to find jobs – let alone keep the jobs some were holding onto. Many of our clients are recent immigrants who had no one to rely on other than us [...]

Our community (also) came through in amazing ways. People from all over the Chicagoland area came to our Share 1 Drive to drop off bags or rice, ramen, diapers, masks, hand sanitizers, and more [...] One of our supporters who came to our October Share 1 Drive said the following after witnessing so many people stopping by to drop off supplies: "I can see that in spite of everything, life is still worth fighting for."

Part 2: Share 1 Drive

From KAN-WIN annual newsletter Chin-Jung (January 2021)

Within days after the stay-at-home order began, KAN-WIN organized our first Share 1 Drive. In an effort to remedy effects of the panic buying which created shortages, we called on members of our community to Share 1, as in share 1 of what you already have – 1 roll of toilet paper, 1 bottle of hand soap, 1 pack of instant ramen, etc. Our community members rose to the challenge and quickly helped fill our storage with these essential items. Since then, we have held two additional Share 1 collection events in front of the H-Mart in Niles (IL). It brought us so much joy to see supporters we hadn't seen for months and even random shoppers who dropped off donations after seeing our signs. During 2021, we will continue to hold Share 1 Drive events. We hope to see all of you there.

A quote from a Share 1 Participant
"I believe that the Share 1 event was a really rewarding experience for me from knowing how many donations we are able to help generate by simply asking out. It made me happy knowing that people actually cared and that I was able to be a part of the process. Although it may have

been tiring and a little awkward at first, I felt like whatever doubt I had in mind questioning if this was going to work vanished towards the end by looking at just how many donations we helped to get. I also think that not only did it make us feel happy but it probably made the people who donated happy too for helping and being a part of a community that cares." – Shirley Zhang, KAN-WIN's ELEVATE Youth Group member, who promoted the Share 1 event to Chinese-speaking shoppers at H-Mart.

Part 3: Share 1 Drive on Social Media

KAN-WIN Facebook post on June 13, 2024. This post is written in English, Korean, Chinese, and Mongolian.

KAN-WIN is hosting a donation drive to collect daily necessities to provide for our clients, many of whom are uninsured, speak limited English, and are struggling financially as a result of experiencing abuse. Share 1 with our survivor community and visit us at H-Mart! ❤️

📌 H-Mart Niles | 801 Civic Center Dr, Niles, IL 60714

🗓️ Saturday, June 29th | 11AM - 2PM

#SupportSurvivors #donationdrive

Notes

HANDOUT CASE STUDY: VOTE FORWARD'S WRITING CAMPAIGN

Instructions
Review the following information about Vote Forward's letter writing campaign, then complete the accompanying Campaign Worksheet.

Vote Forward is a national nonprofit organization that empowers grassroots volunteers to send handwritten letters encouraging fellow Americans to vote.

Part 1: Excerpts from "About Us" from Vote Forward's website

What we do

Vote Forward's flagship voter contact program trains and supports volunteers writing personal, heartfelt letters to potential voters with an easy-to-use online platform. The majority of our letter-writing campaigns are nonpartisan campaigns, supporting our core 501c(3)and 501c(4)[1] social-welfare mission, which focuses on mobilizing potential voters in communities that have historically been marginalized in the political process – such as people of color, women, and young voters…

Our approach

Volunteer-powered: Volunteers are the heart of this effective and inspiring way to make a difference in elections – and we provide the support they need to do it. Not only is letter writing a powerful tool for experienced activists, it's a way to help new volunteers get started on their activism journey. More than one third of surveyed 2020 letter writers told us they had never volunteered for a civic or political cause before getting involved with Vote Forward. Anyone with access to an internet connection and a printer can sign up, download and print letter templates, and write to voters from anywhere, and we're always working on making it even easier to participate. […]

Our origin story

Vote Forward began in 2017 as an experiment conducted by Scott Forman in Alabama, where he sent 1,000 letters to encourage voters in the special US Senate election. Encouraged by the success of that test, Scott and a small group of friends and colleagues built the first version of this platform to allow volunteers to take easy and effective action in future elections. We're so proud of how this community has grown over the years, and the impact we've achieved together.

Part 2: How-to guide: Writing letters to voters with Vote Forward

*Read Vote Forward's webpage: "**How-to guide: Writing letters to voters with Vote Forward**"*

[1] 501c(3) and 501c(4) are two different statuses given to US-based nonprofits by the US Internal Revenue Service (IRS). Explanation of the difference between these two nonprofit status as defined by the IRS found here: **https://donorbox.org/nonprofit-blog/501c3-vs-501c4**.

Part 3: "A cutting-edge tactic to get out the vote in 2020: Handwritten Letters"
This is an excerpt from "A cutting-edge tactic to get out the vote in 2020: Handwritten Letters" by Shay Castle in The New York Times*, 28 October 2020,* **https://www.nytimes.com/2020/10/28/us/politics/vote-forward-letter.html***.*

The hand-addressed envelope stood out to Bria East, next to the sleek fliers featuring smiling politicians promising criminal justice reform or tax cuts. It had been awhile since anyone had written to Ms. East, 26; the letter, signed only "Maria," evoked her childhood pen pals.
Maria didn't provide personal details — no last name, no political affiliation. Instead, she wrote about children and the importance of policies that protect them. It made Ms. East wonder if Maria was, like her, an educator.

Ms. East, who lives just outside of Philadelphia, connected with one other part of the letter: A plea to vote in the upcoming election. So she did, casting a ballot in a presidential race for only the second time in her life, and the first since 2012. Having just graduated and in the midst of a move, Ms. East did not vote in 2016.

"That was something that constantly bothered me," she said, adding that receiving the letter spurred her to fill out the ballot that was laying untouched in her home. "Voting right now is something I need to get out and do." [...]

Maria Eckert, 68, wrote 159 letters for Vote Forward over the course of about two months, including the one that reached Ms. East. Ms. Eckert, a New Jersey resident and — as Ms. East intuited — former early childhood and special education teacher, said she got "goosebumps" upon learning about the fruits of her labor, her first foray into political volunteering.
"I hate to admit it, but I took democracy for granted for many years," said Ms. Eckert. "I'm not as comfortable making phone calls or trying to persuade people for one side or the other. This was a great opportunity for me."

"The one thing I was hoping," she added, "was that one person out of all those letters would vote."

Notes

HANDOUT CAMPAIGN WORKSHEET

Campaign: _____

1. What kind of contribution is being given? Describe the activity in this campaign.

2. Why is this being done? What is going on in the world/community that is prompting this work? How is it helping the organization and its community?

3. What feelings are being expressed by those involved in the campaign?

4. In your opinion, how does this kind of contribution… *(choose one prompt to answer)*
   - Support civil society and connect people around shared values and interests?
   - Reflect freedom of association (or what would happen if freedom of association didn't exist, for these organizations)?
   - Defend democracy?

LESSON 12: ESTABLISH A PRIVATE LIFE

PRACTICE DIGITAL SECURITY

> Establish a private life. Nastier rulers will use what they know about you to push you around. Scrub your computer of malware on a regular basis. Remember that email is skywriting. Consider using alternative forms of the internet, or simply using it less. Have personal exchanges in person. For the same reason, resolve any legal trouble. Tyrants seek the hook on which to hang you. Try not to have hooks."
>
> *On Tyranny,* Chapter 14 (p. 87)

OVERVIEW

Content Level	Ages 14-18 (Grades 9-12)
Time	50 Minutes

Description	This lesson is designed to fit into one class period. Teachers should make adjustments as needed to meet the needs of their students. The lesson includes:
	• 3 Activities
	  • Individual Venn diagram activity related to students' private and public lives
	  • All-class discussion about the connection between privacy and democracy
	  • Small group research about and presentation of a real-world case study related to privacy
	• Reflection Prompts

Guiding Questions	• What is the difference between private life and public life? • Why is privacy important in democratic societies? • How can a lack of privacy lead to authoritarian control? • Why is it important to be cautious about sharing information online?
Learning Objectives	At the end of this lesson, students will be able to: • Understand the concept of privacy and its significance in a democratic society. • Identify contemporary examples of privacy violations and their consequences, and consider how to prevent these violations in the future. • Take steps to enhance their own digital security.

Materials	• **Google Slides deck** (optional)
	• Student Handouts (also available digitally via **Google Docs**)
	  » **Venn Diagram**
	  » **Digital Security Case Studies**
	  » **Case Study Worksheet**
	  » **Protecting Your Digital Security**
	• Computer/internet access for each student (alternative printable materials available)

Common Core Standards *Learn more at **corestandards.org**.*	Reading: Informational Text • CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.2 Speaking & Listening • CCSS.ELA-Literacy.SL.4
Social Justice Standards *These standards were created by Learning for Justice. Learn more at **bit.ly/LFJ-standards**.*	Diversity • DI.9-12.6 • DI.9-12.9 Justice • JU.9-12.12

INTRODUCTION

In his book *On Tyranny: Twenty Lessons from the Twentieth Century*, Historian and Yale University Professor Timothy Snyder offers practical actions that individuals can take to help stop the spread of authoritarianism. One of the book's lessons, "Establish a private life," teaches us to be thoughtful about what we share publicly. Snyder writes that "whoever can pierce your privacy can humiliate you and disrupt your relationships at will" (88). In this lesson, students will examine their own relationship to privacy and consider how privacy supports democracy. They will also learn a few actions that they can take to enhance their digital security.

"Establish a private life" is Chapter 14 in *On Tyranny*, pages 87-91.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

This lesson was written by Kaviya Sekar with support from Woven Teaching. We are very grateful for their contributions to *Defending Democracy*. For more information about Kaviya, see Appendix, p. **213**.

FOCUS ON HUMAN RIGHTS

Woven Teaching believes that **human rights education** is essential for students to understand and assert their own rights and to protect the rights of others. As a result, the **Universal Declaration of Human Rights** (UDHR) lies at the core of Woven Teaching's materials. The document's 30 articles outline fundamental human rights: basic rights and freedoms which every human being is entitled to, regardless of race, religion, birthplace, gender, sexual orientation, or other characteristics. Although its articles are not legally binding, the UDHR serves as a moral compass for the international community.

The activities in this lesson connect directly to several UDHR articles, including:

- **Article 12**: Right to privacy.
- **Article 19**: Right to freedom of opinion and expression.
- **Article 30**: Human rights belong to you; no one can take away your human rights.

ACTIVITIES

1 PUBLIC VS. PRIVATE *10 MINUTES*

Students will reflect on what they understand to be public or private information about themselves by completing a Venn diagram.

Materials

- **Google Slides deck** (optional)
- Student Handout: Venn Diagram (**Handout A**)

Procedure

1. Preparation: Draw a large Venn diagram on the board with two circles labeled "Private Life" and "Public Life" (a Venn diagram is also available in the Google Slides deck). Use the overlapping middle section for context-dependent private and public information.

2. Begin by asking students to think about their daily lives and reflect on the things they do or say that are private versus those they feel comfortable sharing publicly. Ask: *What are some private things you do or say, and what are public things you are comfortable sharing?* Give them a moment to reflect on themselves.

3. Prompt students to think specifically about their online presence, asking the following questions:
    - What are some things you would consider private when you're online? For example, private messages, personal details, or things you only share with a few people.
    - What things do you post publicly or share with a wider audience? For instance, posts on social media that are visible to a large audience.
    - When does the distinction between public and private become blurred in an online environment?

    Give a few personal examples to start the discussion. For instance:

    - Private: Having personal conversations with friends at home
    - Public: Posting a stitch on TikTok
    - Both (overlap): posting about a personal issue to "close friends" on Instagram

4. Distribute one copy of the Venn diagram (**Handout A**) to each student or have students draw a similar Venn diagram in their notebooks. Ask them to fill out a diagram with specific examples from their lives.
    - **Private life:** Encourage students to think about specific activities, conversations, or thoughts they would share only with close friends or family. Have them be specific—who they would share it with, what they would do, and where it would take place.
      Examples: Texting a friend about a personal problem at home; sharing an embarrassing photo with a friend
    - **Public:** Encourage students to think about what they are willing to share with others, including social media posts, participation in school events, or behaviors in public spaces.
      Example: Sharing a photo of a birthday party on Instagram
    - **Both (overlap):** Ask them to consider activities or information that could fall into both categories depending on context or circumstances.
      Example: Talking about weekend plans in a group chat with friends and later mentioning it in a public post

    TEACHING TIP

    Prefer a digital option? Ask each student to make a copy of **this slideshow** and fill out the Venn diagram on a computer or tablet.

5. Bring the class together for a quick debrief, asking for a few volunteers to share their responses. Ask: *Why is it important to keep some information private, both on- and offline?*

2 PRIVACY AND DEMOCRACY *10 MINUTES*

Students will consider the connection between information and power, and the importance of personal privacy in maintaining democracy.

Materials

- **Google Slides deck** (optional)

Procedure

1. Read aloud and/or display the following excerpt from "Why Democracy Needs Privacy" by Carissa Véliz, associate professor at the University of Oxford:

    "The power that comes about as a result of knowing personal details about someone is a very particular kind of power, although it also allows those who hold it the possibility of transforming it into economic, political, and other kinds of power.

    "Conversely, the power that privacy grants us collectively as citizens is necessary for democracy—for us to vote according to our beliefs and without undue pressure, for us to protest anonymously without fear of repercussions, to have freedom to associate, speak our minds, read what we are curious about.

"If we are going to live in a democracy, the bulk of power needs to be with the people. And whoever has the data has the power. Privacy is important because it gives power to the people. Privacy is a public good, and defending it is our civic duty."[1]

2. Ask students to answer the following questions in pairs:
    - Véliz writes that, "knowing personal details about someone is a very particular kind of power." What does she mean?
    - How does having information about you give power to a government or other authority? What type of information might those in power want?
    - Do you agree or disagree with Véliz when she says that "defending [privacy] is our civic duty"?

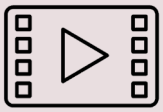
3. Bring students together and ask a few pairs to share their responses. Lead a brief discussion about the relationship between privacy and the authoritarian state using the following questions:
    - How does the idea of an authoritarian regime, where privacy may be limited, relate to our discussion on private and public life?
    - Why do you think authoritarian regimes want to control private life?
    - Do you think that our government protects your privacy? Why or why not? What evidence do you have?

    Guide students to see that in an authoritarian regime, the distinction between private and public life is minimized, as the state exerts control over many aspects of life, including what we typically consider private.

    Emphasize that this control can lead to the loss of personal freedom and autonomy, which is why maintaining a distinction between private and public life is crucial in a democratic society.

    Erosions of privacy and mass surveillance are not unheard of in democratic societies either. Many corporations, for example, monitor and sell our data as part of their business models (think: shopping for an item online, then getting ads for it elsewhere). It is important for us to remain vigilant and make sure that privacy is protected everywhere.

TIMOTHY SNYDER SPEAKS: *ON TYRANNY*



Timothy Snyder's **YouTube channel** includes a **video** (6:04) on this and each of the other 19 points in *On Tyranny*. If you have time to do so, you may wish to include this video in the lesson with the following discussion questions:

- What does Snyder mean when he says, "What people who are trying to weaken or undermine democracy will do, is get us used to crossing that line [between public and private]–get us used to giving ourselves away"?
- Snyder states that, "In order to be your own person, in order to have a private life, what you need is not just to have an 'us and them,' a 'for and against,' a 'they're wrong and I'm right.' You have to have your own perspective, which sometimes agrees with those people [...] but fundamentally comes from its own place." What can you do to develop your own opinion about the world?

*Technology-free classroom? A transcript for this video is available via **Google Docs**.*

[1] Carissa Véliz, "Why Democracy Needs Privacy," Boston Review, 6 April 2021, **https://www.bostonreview.net/articles/why-democracy-needs-privacy**.

3 DIGITAL PRIVACY IN THE REAL WORLD *25 MINUTES*

Students will work in small groups to explore a real-world case of privacy infringement. Then, they will give a brief presentation on their findings.

Materials

- **Google Slides deck** (optional)
- Student Handouts
  - » Digital Privacy Case Study (**Handout B**)
    - **Bangladesh: Digital Security Act**
    - **Turkey: Disinformation Law**
    - **Cambridge Analytica Scandal**
  - » Case Study worksheet (**Handout C**)
- Computer/internet access for each student (alternative printable materials available)

Procedure

1. Preparation: For this activity, each student will need access to a computer/tablet and the internet. If you have a technology-free classroom, click “Print” or “Transcript” next to each source on the Digital Privacy Case Studies (pp. **160-165**) to access a printable PDF or Google Doc.

2. Explain to students that they will now dive deeper into real-world examples of challenges to the distinction between private and public life, and how government or corporate actions can erode privacy.

3. Divide students into small groups and distribute one Digital Privacy Case Study (**Handout B**) to each group. Give each student in the group their own copy of the Case Study worksheet (**Handout C**).

   Each group should designate a recorder (person to take notes on the reflection questions) and a reporter (person to report back to the whole class).

   Note: There are three different case studies; groups will review different cases. If there are more than three groups, cases will be repeated.

4. Inform students that they will work together to read/watch the provided resources and discuss how the case connects to the themes of privacy and power. Groups should spend 10 minutes reviewing the materials, then 10 minutes completing their worksheets and discussing the key points of their presentations with their group.

   Circulate the room to check in with each group, answer any questions, and ensure that all students are engaged and on task.

5. Once the groups have finished their analysis, ask the reporter from each group to briefly present their group’s findings to the class. Ask them to explain the case study they analyzed and how it relates to the key themes of privacy, control, and public vs. private life.

   After each presentation, facilitate a short Q&A session where the rest of the class can ask questions or make comments.

6. After the presentations, summarize and connect the key themes of the case studies by explaining three important concepts that impact privacy and control in the digital age: obstacles to access, limits on content, and violations of user rights. These concepts will help students contextualize the examples they just analyzed.

KEY THEMES

- **Obstacles to access:** Infrastructural, economic, and political barriers that limit internet access or specific platforms, including government shutdowns of connectivity

  Explain that in the case of Bangladesh's Digital Security Act, government policies create barriers to access by restricting or shutting down online spaces. This act has created fear and limitations on what can be accessed, with citizens facing real consequences for online activities. Relate this to the idea that governments can use infrastructural and political barriers to control who can access certain information or platforms.

- **Limits on content:** censorship, content filtering, and the manipulation of what can be shared or accessed online

  Use Turkey's Disinformation Law as an example of how governments control the flow of information by regulating or censoring content online. The law allows the Turkish government to decide what content is "false" and can lead to arrests for sharing misinformation. This limits free expression and restricts access to a diversity of viewpoints, showcasing how censorship and content manipulation affect public discourse and privacy.

- **Violations of user rights:** Legal repercussions, surveillance, and privacy violations that infringe on free expression or personal data security

  Refer to the Cambridge Analytica Scandal, which highlights how corporations can misuse personal data without consent, violating user rights. Individuals' personal information was harvested to manipulate political opinions, showing how privacy breaches can have serious implications for democracy. This case study exemplifies how both corporate entities and governments can surveil and exploit personal data for control or influence.

4 CLOSING: REFLECTION *5 MINUTES*

Students will compose a written reflection on the importance of personal privacy and how to protect it.

Materials

- **Google Slides deck** (optional)
- Student Handout: Protecting Your Digital Security (**Handout D**)
- Notebooks/journals

Procedure

1. Display or read aloud the reflection prompts and give students a few minutes to respond in their notebooks.
   - What was your biggest takeaway from today's lesson?
     Encourage students to consider a specific concept, case study, or idea that stood out to them, whether it was related to privacy, democracy/authoritarianism, or digital rights.
   - How do you feel about your privacy online now compared to before this lesson?
     Ask students to reflect on whether their perception of their own online privacy has changed, and what steps they might take moving forward to protect it.

2. After the reflection, share Protecting Your Digital Security (**Handout D**). The handout includes practical steps students can take to protect their privacy and navigate misinformation. Encourage them to go through it and come up with more steps to add to it.

RESOURCES

Woven Teaching

Human Rights Education
woventeaching.org/human-rights-education

Learn more about Human Rights Education, a pedagogy rooted in advancing human rights through teaching that promotes cooperation, respect, and the dignity of all people.

Universal Declaration of Human Rights
woventeaching.org/udhr

From this page, students can access information about the history of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, as well as full text and student versions of the document.

Timothy Snyder

On Tyranny: Twenty Lessons from the Twentieth Century
New York: Tim Duggan Books, 2017

The framework created by Professor Timothy Snyder in *On Tyranny: Twenty Lessons from the Twentieth Century* provides the basis for the *Defending Democracy* curriculum.

Lesson 14: Establish A Private Life
youtu.be/Rf-T1vDz63g

In 2021, Timothy Snyder created a series of videos about *On Tyranny*, providing an updated perspective on the book's lessons.

Activities

Teaching Students the Cyber Safety Basics
Edutopia (Rachelle Dené Poth, 5 February 2024)
edutopia.org/article/teaching-students-cyber-safety

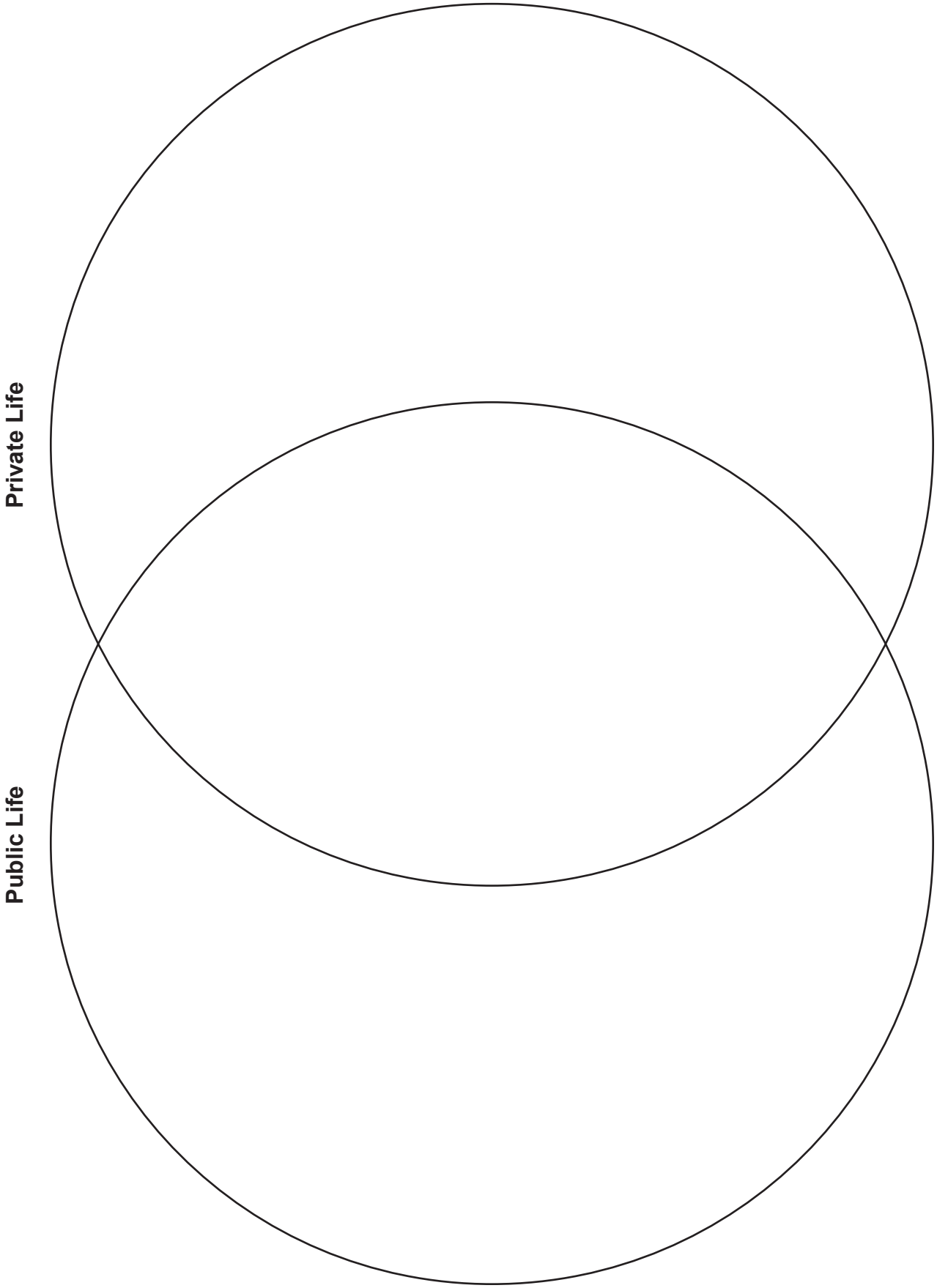
Review this brief article for tips on teaching students how to enhance their digital security.

Freedom on the Net 2023: Policy Recommendations
Freedom House
freedomhouse.org/report/freedom-net/2023/repressive-power-artificial-intelligence/policy-recommendations

This report includes suggestions for actions that policymakers, the tech industry, and civil society can take to address the global decline in internet freedom.

HANDOUT

PUBLIC VS. PRIVATE LIFE



HANDOUT CASE STUDY: THE DIGITAL SECURITY ACT IN BANGLADESH

In this activity, you will analyze the impact of the Digital Security Act (DSA) in Bangladesh. You will explore how it blurs the line between private and public life, the consequences of this loss of privacy, and the role of the government in enforcing control through the DSA.

Step 1: Read and watch for context

1. Read the following article:

   "Digital Security Act: A farmer, far from internet, on the run. The Daily Star. 21 March 2021. **https://www.thedailystar.net/backpage/news/digital-security-act-farmer-far-internet-the-run-2063957**. [**Print**]

2. For deeper context, read or watch one of the following:
   - **Read:** Riaz, Ali. "How Bangladesh's Digital Security Act Is Creating a Culture of Fear." Carnegie Endowment. 9 December 2021. **https://carnegieendowment.org/research/2021/12/how-bangladeshs-digital-security-act-is-creating-a-culture-of-fear?lang=en**. [**Print**]
   - **Watch:** Carnegie Endowment. "Explaining Bangladesh's Digital Security Act." YouTube. Video, 3:50. **https://youtu.be/A1hG_7zw0uk**. [**Transcript**]

   Note: For #2, some group members should skim the article while others watch the video. This will give the group the most collective information to use in the rest of the activity.

Step 2: Fill in the Case Study worksheet

You should discuss as a group, but each person must complete their own worksheet.

- **Private vs. Public Life**
  In the first column, identify how the DSA and its enforcement blur the line between what is private and what is public in citizens' lives. Consider how personal actions (e.g., social media posts) are subjected to public scrutiny by the government.
- **Consequences of Loss of Privacy**
  In the second column, note the specific consequences for individuals who have been affected by the DSA. This could include imprisonment, fear, self-censorship, or any other outcomes caused by the lack of privacy.
- **Role of Government or Corporations**
  In the third column, examine how the government or Bangladesh enforces control through the DSA. What role does the government play in diminishing privacy? Is there any mention of corporations (e.g., social media platforms) that assist or resist this control?

Step 3: Reflection Questions

After completing the worksheet, reflect on the following questions as a group. As the group discusses, the group recorder should capture responses below.

1. How does the Digital Security Act in Bangladesh illustrate the erosion of privacy in a way that aligns with what Carissa Véliz said about the connection between having knowledge about someone and power?

2. What are the broader societal implications of living in an environment where privacy is systematically eroded by the government?

3. How can individuals and communities resist or navigate the challenges presented by laws like the DSA?

Step 4: Present your findings

The reporter for each group will present their case study analysis to the class. Use the worksheet as a guide to structure your presentation. Be prepared to explain how the DSA in Bangladesh impacts the distinction between private and public life and the consequences of its enforcement on individual rights and freedoms.

HANDOUT CASE STUDY: TURKEY'S DISINFORMATION LAW

In this activity, you will analyze the impact of Turkey's Disinformation Law–how it affects the distinction between private and public life, the consequences of the law on individual freedom, and the role of the Turkish government in controlling information flow.

Step 1: Read and watch for context

1. Read the following article:

   Hayatsever, Huseyin and Ali Kucukgocmen. "In a first, Turkish court arrests journalist under 'disinformation' law." Reuters. 15 December 2022. **https://www.reuters.com/world/middle-east/first-turkish-court-arrests-journalist-under-disinformation-law-2022-12-15**. [**Print**]

2. For deeper context, read or watch one of the following:
   - **Read:** Coşkun, Alper. "Turkey's New Disinformation Law Affects More Than Meets the Eye." Carnegie Endowment. 19 December 2022. **https://carnegieendowment.org/research/2022/12/turkeys-new-disinformation-law-affects-more-than-meets-the-eye?lang=en**. [**Print**]
   - **Watch:** Euronews. "Turkish law tightening rules on social media comes into effect." YouTube. Video, 3:06. 10 October 2020. **https://youtu.be/je148wDykag**. [**Transcript**]

   Note: For #2, some group members should skim the article while others watch the video. This will give the group the most collective information to use in the rest of the activity.

Step 2: Fill in the Case Study worksheet

You should discuss as a group, but each person must complete their own worksheet.

- **Private vs. Public Life**
  In the first column, explore how Turkey's Disinformation Law creates ambiguity between private and public life. Focus on how private conversations, social media posts, or public criticisms are scrutinized under this law and how it affects individuals' ability to express themselves freely.
- **Consequences of Loss of Privacy**
  In the second column, identify the specific consequences of this law for individuals, such as arrests, fear of speaking out, surveillance, or self-censorship. How does the lack of privacy influence public discourse or individual actions?
- **Role of Government or Corporations**
  In the third column, examine how the Turkish government enforces this law and controls the flow of information. Are there any corporate actors (e.g., social media platforms) involved in assisting the enforcement of the law or resisting it?

Step 3: Reflection Questions

After completing the worksheet, reflect on the following questions as a group. As the group discusses, the group recorder should capture responses below.

1. How does Turkey's Disinformation Law relate to the erasure of private life, as discussed in our previous activities on privacy?

2. What are the broader societal implications for free speech and individual rights when laws like this are in place?

3. What strategies can citizens or journalists use to navigate and resist the limitations imposed by the law?

Step 4: Present your findings

The reporter for each group will present their case study analysis to the class. Use the worksheet as a guide to structure your presentation. Be prepared to explain how Turkey's Disinformation Law impacts the balance between private and public life, the consequences for individual rights, and how the government enforces control over information.

HANDOUT CASE STUDY: CAMBRIDGE ANALYTICA SCANDAL

In this activity, you will explore the Cambridge Analytica controversy and its impact on privacy, public life, and how personal data was manipulated for political and commercial purposes. You will analyze how the misuse of personal data blurred the line between private and public life and the consequences of these actions.

Step 1: Read and watch for context

1. Read the following article:

   Criddel, Cristina. "Facebook sued over Cambridge Analytica data scandal." BBC. 28 October 2020. **https://www.bbc.com/news/technology-54722362**. [**Print**]

2. For deeper context, read or watch one of the following:
   - **Read:** Harbath, Katie and Collier Fernekes. "History of the Cambridge Analytica Controversy." Bipartisan Policy Center. 16 March 2023. **https://bipartisanpolicy.org/blog/cambridge-analytica-controversy/#**. [**Print**]
   - **Watch:** The Guardian. "What is the Cambridge Analytica scandal?" YouTube. Video, 3:40. 20 March 2018. **https://youtu.be/Q91nvbJSmS4**. [**Transcript**]

   Note: For #2, some group members should skim the article while others watch the video. This will give the group the most collective information to use in the rest of the activity.

Step 2: Fill in the Case Study worksheet

You should discuss as a group, but each person must complete their own worksheet.

- **Private vs. Public Life**
  In the first column, analyze how Cambridge Analytica's access to personal data blurred the lines between private and public life. How was private information turned into a public commodity? Consider the impact of social media and data harvesting.
- **Consequences of Loss of Privacy**
  In the second column, focus on the specific consequences for individuals whose data was used without consent. Consider how this affected public trust in institutions, influenced elections, or led to political manipulation.
- **Role of Government or Corporations**
  In the third column, examine the role played by Cambridge Analytica, Facebook, and political entities in using private data for profit and political gain. What were the ethical implications of these actions?

Step 3: Reflection Questions

After completing the worksheet, reflect on the following questions as a group. As the group discusses, the group recorder should capture responses below.

1. What lessons can we learn from the Cambridge Analytica scandal about the vulnerability of personal data in the digital age?

2. What changes have been implemented in data protection laws or corporate policies as a result of this controversy? How effective are these changes in protecting individual privacy?

3. What should individuals and governments do differently to prevent similar abuses of personal data in the future?

Step 4: Present Your Findings

The reporter for each group will present their case study analysis to the class. Use the worksheet as a guide to structure your presentation. Be prepared to explain how Cambridge Analytica impacts the balance between private and public life, the consequences for individual rights, and how the government enforces control over information.

HANDOUT CASE STUDY WORKSHEET

Case study: _____

Private vs. Public Life	Consequences of Loss of Privacy	Role of Government or Corporations
How does this case blur the lines between private and public life?	What are the effects on individuals when privacy is compromised?	How do government policies or corporate actions contribute to this control?
Key Points:	**Key Points:**	**Key Points:**

Notes

HANDOUT PROTECTING YOUR DIGITAL SECURITY

Immediate Next Steps to Help Protect Your Private Life

1. Use encrypted messaging apps and email services
    - Opt for messaging apps that prioritize encryption, such as **Signal**, which offer stronger security measures to protect your conversations.
    - For online communication such as email, consider switching to more secure platforms which offer end-to-end encryption to keep your messages private.

2. Review and adjust your privacy settings on social media
    - Check the privacy settings on your social media accounts (Facebook, Instagram, TikTok, etc.) and adjust who can see your posts, personal details, location details, and activity.

3. Limit the amount of personal information you share online
    - Be mindful of the personal information you share publicly.
    - Limit the exposure of your location, contact details, and private thoughts on social platforms.

4. Help combat misinformation
    - Learn how to recognize misinformation and fact-check content before sharing it.
    - Use resources like **FactCheck.org** to verify the accuracy of news and social media content.

Additional Resources for Further Reading

Bateman, Jon and Dean Jackson. “Countering Disinformation Effectively: An Evidence-Based Policy Guide.” Carnegie Endowment. 31 January 2024. **https://carnegieendowment.org/research/2024/01/countering-disinformation-effectively-an-evidence-based-policy-guide?lang=en**.

Read about policy recommendations to counter disinformation effectively in this evidence-based policy guide.

“Freedom on the Net.” Freedom House. **https://freedomhouse.org/report/freedom-net**.

Learn more about how internet freedom is impacted worldwide in this report from Freedom House.

LESSON 13: PRACTICE CORPOREAL POLITICS

BE AN ACTIVIST AND ORGANIZER

> Practice corporeal politics. Power wants your body softening in your chair and your emotions dissipating on the screen. Get outside. Put your body in unfamiliar places with unfamiliar people. Make new friends and march with them."
>
> *On Tyranny,* Chapter 13 (p. 83)

OVERVIEW

Content Level	Ages 14-18 (Grades 9-12)
Time	50 Minutes

Description	This lesson is designed to fit into one class period. Teachers should make adjustments as needed to meet the needs of their students. The lesson includes:
	• 4 Activities
	  • All-class video review and discussion about youth activism
	  • Think-Pair-Share related to historical and contemporary civil disobedience tactics
	  • Small group analysis of a real-world case study related to civil disobedience and social change
	  • All-class brainstorm about effective tactics for making social change
	• 1 Extension Activity

Guiding Questions	• How has youth organizing shaped our world? • How can investigating movement and activism histories drive our choices as activists and organizers in the present? • What organizing strategies have been most powerful in creating social change? • What opportunities exist in "corporeal" (non-digital) activism that aren't available in digital activism?
Learning Objectives	At the end of this lesson, students will be able to: • Identify different forms of civil disobedience. • Analyze the strategies they encounter in social activism and reflect on their effectiveness. • Reflect on local social movements to which they feel personally connected.

Materials	• **Google Slides deck** (optional)
	• List: Movement Strategy Case Studies (see p. **172**)
	• Video: "**Want to be a Youth Activist? Here Are Some Tips**" (3:21, CBC Kids News)
	• Student Handouts (also available digitally via **Google Docs**)
	  » **Examples of Civil Disobedience**
	  » **Movement Strategies Note Catcher**
	• Computer/internet access for each student (alternative printable materials available)
	• Poster paper
	• Sticky notes

Common Core Standards *Learn more at* ***corestandards.org****.*	Reading • CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.R.1 Reading: Informational Text • CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.1	Speaking & Listening • CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.SL.1 History/Social Studies • CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.2
Social Justice Standards *These standards were created by Learning for Justice. Learn more at* ***bit.ly/LFJ-standards****.*	Diversity • DI.9-12.7 • DI.9-12.8 Justice • JU.9-12.12 • JU.9-12.13 • JU.9-12.15	Action • AC.9-12.20

INTRODUCTION

In his book *On Tyranny: Twenty Lessons from the Twentieth Century*, Historian and Yale University Professor Timothy Snyder offers practical actions that individuals can take to help stop the spread of authoritarianism. One of the book's lessons, "Practice corporeal politics," encourages individuals to get involved in organizations and protest movements in the real world. "If tyrants feel no consequences for their actions in the three-dimensional world," Snyder writes, "nothing will change" (84).

This lesson introduces students to various acts of civil disobedience that people have engaged in to make change. The goal of this lesson is to inspire students to be changemakers, much like those described in the lesson's case studies.

"Practice corporeal politics" is Chapter 13 in *On Tyranny*, pages 83-86.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

This lesson was written by Hana Feit with support from Woven Teaching. We are very grateful for her contributions to *Defending Democracy*. For more information about Hana, see Appendix, p. **212**.

FOCUS ON HUMAN RIGHTS

Woven Teaching believes that **human rights education** is essential for students to understand and assert their own rights and to protect the rights of others. As a result, the **Universal Declaration of Human Rights** (UDHR) lies at the core of Woven Teaching's materials. The document's 30 articles outline fundamental human rights: basic rights and freedoms which every human being is entitled to, regardless of race, religion, birthplace, gender, sexual orientation, or other characteristics. Although its articles are not legally binding, the UDHR serves as a moral compass for the international community.

The activities in this lesson connect directly to several UDHR articles, including:

- **Article 1**: Right to equality, dignity, and respect.
- **Article 3**: Right to life, freedom, and safety.
- **Article 19**: Right to freedom of opinion and expression.
- **Article 20**: Right to participate in organizations and organize peaceful protests and meetings.
- **Article 29**: Right to be supported by your community and a duty to do the same.

ACTIVITIES

1 WHAT IS AN ACTIVIST? *5 MINUTES*

Students will watch a short video and consider what unique assets youth activists bring to movements for social change.

Materials

- **Google Slides deck** (optional)
- Video: "**Want to be a Youth Activist? Here Are Some Tips**" (3:21, CBC Kids News)

Procedure

1. Begin by explaining that today's focus will be on the question: *What strategies have been most powerful in creating social change, particularly in movements led by young people?*

   Our goal is to explore how investigating movement histories and strategies can shape our choices as activists and organizers in the present.

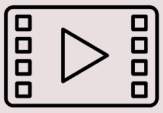
2. Explain that an activist is a person who takes action for change, usually on social or political issues. Ask: *What unique assets do young people have as movement organizers and activists?* Elicit a few student responses, then watch "**Want to be a Youth Activist? Here Are Some Tips**" (3:21).

   *Note: Technology-free classroom? A transcript for this video is available via **Google Docs**.*

3. After watching the video, ask if any of the students in the room consider themselves to be activists. If yes, ask them to share briefly about what cause(s) they work toward.

4. Explain that for the next activity, we're going to look at 20 historical forms of civil disobedience, tapping into any knowledge we already have about movements or individuals who have employed these strategies.

TIMOTHY SNYDER SPEAKS: *ON TYRANNY*



Timothy Snyder's **YouTube channel** includes a **video** (5:40) on this and each of the other 19 points in *On Tyranny*. If you have time to do so, you may wish to include this video in the lesson with the following discussion questions:

- Snyder states that, "whether or not we get out of the house, whether or not we're with other people, whether or not we physically move around has a tremendous influence on how we feel about the world." Do you agree or disagree with this statement? Why?
- Everyone has something to offer the realm of corporeal politics. For some people, attending a protest or other political/community gathering out of the house is not an option. For example, someone with a disability that affects their mobility might have trouble attending a march, or an immunocompromised person may have to avoid large crowds. What are some ways that people could participate in corporeal politics without attending an event or large gatherings?

  Possible responses: Making signs and banners for their friends to carry, helping coordinate protest/march logistics ahead of time (e.g. applying for permits, planning a march route, making arrangements for security, etc.)

*Technology-free classroom? A transcript for this video is available via **Google Docs**.*

2 WHAT IS CIVIL DISOBEDIENCE? *10 MINUTES*

Students will learn about different forms of civil disobedience and discuss strategies with a partner.

Materials

- **Google Slides deck** (optional)
- Student Handout: Examples of Civil Disobedience (**Handout A**)

Procedure

1. Share the following definition of civil disobedience:

   Civil disobedience is the deliberate breaking of a law or command in order to bring about change, usually in the form of policy change from the government.

   Civil disobedience is often done publicly and collectively when people feel that a policy is unjust. Rather than being apathetic and accepting things as they are, people engage in civil disobedience as a means of expressing "people power."

2. Ask: *What are some examples of civil disobedience strategies?* Elicit answers as you distribute one copy of Examples of Civil Disobedience (**Handout A**) to each student.

3. Explain that students should choose one strategy at random, then turn to a partner and share any prior knowledge of where/when the strategy has been employed. You may wish to model the activity by choosing one or two strategies and discussing them as a class.

   Note: The Google Slides deck includes two examples from the handout, but you may wish to swap these out for strategies that you think will resonate more with your students.

4. Bring the class together and quickly debrief. Ask: *Were you surprised by any of these strategies?*

TEACHING TIP

A digital handout, including sources for each example, is available via **Google Docs**.

3 CIVIL DISOBEDIENCE IN THE REAL WORLD *25 MINUTES*

Students will examine case studies from movements around the world and together with their peers, compare/contrast strategies from other movements.

Materials

- **Google Slides deck** (optional)
- Movement Strategy Case Studies (see p. **172**; also available via **Google Docs**)
- Student Handout: Movement Strategies Note Catcher (**Handout B**)
- Computer/internet access for each student (alternative printable materials available)

Procedure

1. Preparation: Review the list of Movement Strategy Case Studies and choose which cases you will give to your students. This is a collection of texts to choose from, both written and audiovisual. Choose case studies based on your class size, students' reading abilities and school/classroom cultures and identities. When possible, we suggest sourcing local and more current examples as well.

   Note: Technology-free classroom? Click "Print" or "Transcript" next to each source on the Movement Strategy Case Studies list to access a printable PDF or Google Doc.

2. Explain that students will read case studies about movements for social change from around the world. Remind them that anyone can engage in activism and civil disobedience; many forms of civil disobedience do not require specialized knowledge or training.

3. Divide students into groups of four. Distribute one Movement Strategies Note Catcher (**Handout B**) and assign one case study from the list of Movement Strategy Case Studies to each student.

   Note: Each group member should have a different case study. Case studies may be repeated between groups.

4. Instruct students to read and take notes on their assigned case study, using their notes to complete their section of the Movement Strategies Note Catcher.

5. When all members of the group have completed their notes, students will share a quick summary of their text and their strategy findings with partners. Partners will take notes of one another's findings in the available sections of their Note Catchers.

6. Groups will close by discussing and questioning any differences and similarities between their case studies.

TEACHING TIP

If students need additional scaffolding, you may wish to model filling out the Note Catcher with a case study that you are not giving students.

7. Bring the class together for a quick debrief, asking a couple groups to share some of the differences and similarities they noticed.

MOVEMENT STRATEGY CASE STUDIES

*This list is also available digitally via **Google Docs**.*

Global History

Read

- **Chile – Feminist activists protest through song**
  Hinsliff, Gaby. "'The rapist is you!': why a Chilean protest chant is being sung around the world." *The Guardian*. 2 February 2020. **https://www.theguardian.com/society/2020/feb/03/the-rapist-is-you-chilean-protest-song-chanted-around-the-world-un-iolador-en-tu-camino**. [**Print**]
- **Thailand – Pro-democracy student protests**
  Ratcliffe, Rebecca. "'We want a true democracy': students lead Thailand's protest movement." *The Guardian*. 24 August 2020. **https://www.theguardian.com/world/2020/aug/24/we-want-a-true-democracy-students-lead-thailands-protest-movement**. [**Print**]
- **Dominican Republic – 14th of June Movement against dictatorship**
  "The Spark That Brought Down Trujillo." CommonLit. 2017. **https://www.commonlit.org/en/texts/the-spark-that-brought-down-trujillo#**. [**Print**]
- **China – Tiananmen Square protests**
  "What really happened in the 1989 Tiananmen Square protests." Amnesty International. 18 May 2023. **https://www.amnesty.org.uk/china-1989-tiananmen-square-protests-demonstration-massacre**. [**Print**]

Watch

- **Palestine – Resistance through reporting in Gaza**
  AJ+. "Listen To Bisan Owda's Acceptance Speech At The Peabody Awards." YouTube. Video, 2:22. 26 June 2024. **https://youtu.be/8ptBz1oJLDw**. [**Transcript**]
- **South Africa – Student protests gain international solidarity**
  BBC What's New. "The teen uprising that changed South Africa forever." YouTube video, 3:06. 12 October 2021. **https://youtu.be/comKTWEOF1c**. [**Transcript**]

- **Germany – Students resist the Nazi regime**
  Gillespie, Iseult and TED-ED. "The secret student resistance to Hitler." YouTube. Video, 5:32. 3 September 2023. **https://youtu.be/ZtOKRsF6Rr0**. [**Transcript**]
- **United Kingdom – LGBT activists show solidarity with striking miners**
  Metro. "LGBT Icon: You need to know Mark Ashton's story." YouTube. Video, 2:36. 17 February 2023. **https://youtu.be/lzL8gm88pvM**. [**Transcript**]

A database of other social movements and acts of civil disobedience is available at the Global Nonviolent Action Database: **https://nvdatabase.swarthmore.edu**.

US History

Read

- **Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee Freedom Singers**
  "The Freedom Singers." Civil Rights Movement Archive. **https://www.crmvet.org/info/sncc50_freedom-singers.pdf**. [**Print**]
- **Student-led Green Feather Movement protests censorship**
  Kysia, Alison. "The Green Feather Movement." Zinn Education Project. 2013. **https://www.zinnedproject.org/materials/the-green-feather-movement**. [**Print**]
- **Founding of the Lowell Female Labor Reform Association**
  "Lowell Female Labor Reform Association." National Parks Service. 26 October 2021. **https://www.nps.gov/lowe/learn/historyculture/lflra.htm**. [**Print**]
- **Students create AAPI history lessons**
  Quattlebaum, Mary. "Young activists create Asian American history lesson to fight racism." *The Washington Post*. 31 May 2022. **https://www.washingtonpost.com/kidspost/2022/05/31/mina-fedor-aapi-youth-activist**. [**Print**]
- **High school student walkout in support of the Chicano Power Movement**
  Sahagún, Louis. "East L.A., 1968: 'Walkout!' The day high school students helped ignite the Chicano power movement." *Los Angeles Times*. 1 March 2018. **https://www.latimes.com/nation/la-na-1968-east-la-walkouts-20180301-htmlstory.html**. [**Print**]

Listen

- **Tinker v. Des Moines free speech case at the US Supreme Court**
  "Tinker v. Des Moines Podcast." United States Courts. Podcast. Audio, 3:50. **https://www.uscourts.gov/about-federal-courts/educational-resources/supreme-court-landmarks/tinker-v-des-moines-podcast**. [**Transcript**]

Watch

- **Standing Rock Sioux tribe and allies protest against construction of oil pipeline**
  AJ+. "Native American Resistance Camp Fights Oil Pipeline." YouTube. Video, 4:09. 31 August 2016. **https://youtu.be/Lpow8SFe98Q**. [**Transcript**]
- **Disabled activists speak about the Americans with Disabilities Act**
  Crip Camp/Netflix. "How the ADA Changed the Built World." YouTube. Video, 11:55. **https://youtu.be/5aiFVhXSvgc**. [**Transcript**]

Other case studies are available at the Zinn Education Project Student Protest Collection: **https://www.zinnedproject.org/collection/student-protests**.

4 TAKING ACTION IN YOUR COMMUNITY *10 MINUTES*

Students will consider effective strategies for making social change.

Materials

- Poster paper
- Sticky notes

Procedure

1. Preparation: Create three posters, each labeled with a local social movement focus. We encourage you to choose topics that resonate with the cultures and geography of your setting. For example:
    - Creating more affordable, supported housing in our area
    - Changing our school's curriculum
    - Improving access to healthcare and services in our area

2. Distribute sticky notes to each student. Explain that based on their historical inquiries, students will consider which "corporeal" (i.e., non-digital) strategies could be effective at creating change in each of the social movements listed on the posters. Their sticky notes should include the strategy as well as an explanation of why this would be an effective strategy.

    Encourage students to think critically about what strategies pair best with what social movement. You may allow students to make their sticky notes anonymous if you believe it will allow for more intellectual risks.

3. If time allows, give students an opportunity to share out one of their sticky notes, focusing on their reasoning.

ADDITIONAL MATERIALS

EXTENSION ACTIVITY: TIPS FROM A YOUTH ACTIVIST

Students will read tips from a youth activist and consider how to apply those tips to their own activism.

Materials

- Webpage: "**We Are Here & We Will Be Seen: 5 Tips For Youth On The Front Lines Of Advocacy, Change & Justice**" (Youth Advocacy Project)
- Computer/internet access for each student (alternative printable materials available)
- Notebooks/journals

Procedure

1. Direct students to "**We Are Here & We Will Be Seen: 5 Tips For Youth On The Front Lines Of Advocacy, Change & Justice**" by Grant E. Loveless, a student activist from Austin, Texas. This post comes from the Youth Advocacy Project, which "helps teen activists build the skills, networks, and resources to lead movements in their community."

    *Note: Technology-free classroom? Provide **printed copies** of the article for students.*

2. Instruct students to read the article, then respond to the following questions in their notebooks:
    a. Loveless mentions that self-care is crucial when undertaking social change work. What rituals or activities do you engage in as self-care? How do you take care of your mind, body, and spirit?
    b. What cause are you most passionate about? Why?
    c. Who in your community can support you in doing work for your cause? Think: Friends, family, trusted adults, organizations in your community, etc.

d. How can you engage in social change work and maintain your other responsibilities? Do you think this will be challenging?
e. How can your classmates support you in social change work? How can you support them in fighting for the causes they care about?

SOURCES: EXAMPLES OF CIVIL DISOBEDIENCE

1. Meeting in a plaza	Goñi, Uki. "40 years later, the mothers of Argentina's 'disappeared' refuse to be silent." *The Guardian*. 28 April 2017. **https://www.theguardian.com/world/2017/apr/28/mothers-plaza-de-mayo-argentina-anniversary**.
2. Graffiti	"Some FAQs about BUGA-UP." BugaUp.org. **https://www.bugaup.org/faq.htm**.
3. Walking off a job	"Quebecs' Working Class Unites with Union Members in a "'Common Front for Fairness.'" Canadian Labour Congress. **https://canadianlabour.ca/quebecs-working-class-unites-with-union-members-in-a-common-front-for-fairness**.
4. Blocking roads	Long, Gideon. "Tourists trapped in Chile due to fuel price strikes." BBC News. 16 January 2011. **https://www.bbc.com/news/world-latin-america-12200792**.
5. Refusing to disperse when ordered	"Tiananmen Square incident." Encyclopaedia Britannica. **https://www.britannica.com/event/Tiananmen-Square-incident**.
6. Hunger striking	Harris, Paul. "Guantánamo Bay hunger strike: quarter of inmates now being force-fed." *The Guardian*. 6 June 2013. **https://www.theguardian.com/world/2013/jun/06/guantanamo-bay-hunger-strike-quarter-force-fed**.
7. Making salt	"Salt March." History.com. 29 August 2022. **https://www.history.com/topics/asian-history/salt-march**.
8. Tree sitting	Miller, Josh. "The Tree Sitting in New Zealand (1978)." VIDEA. 11 November 2017. **https://videa.ca/wp-content/uploads/2017/11/11.pdf**.
9. Blocking construction equipment	Pasternack, Judith Mahoney. "Palestinian nonviolence–alive and sometimes victorious." Waging Nonviolence. 20 October 2010. **https://wagingnonviolence.org/2010/10/palestinian-nonviolence-alive-and-sometimes-victorious**.
10. Withholding sex	"Sex strike brings peace to village in southern Philippines." New York Post. 16 September 2011. **https://nypost.com/2011/09/16/sex-strike-brings-peace-to-village-in-southern-philippines**.
11. Building a structure	Schils, Nathalie. "Puerto Ricans expel United States Navy from Culebra Island, 1970-1974." Global Nonviolent Action Database. 7 June 2011. **https://nvdatabase.swarthmore.edu/content/puerto-ricans-expel-united-states-navy-culebra-island-1970-1974**.
12. Driving	Murphy, Caryle. "Saudi Women Reunite To Remember Driving Protest." NPR. 16 December 2008. **https://www.npr.org/2008/12/16/97541372/saudi-women-reunite-to-remember-driving-protest**.
13. Boycotting products	McGreal, Chris. "Boycotts and sanctions helped rid South Africa of apartheid – is Israel next in line?" *The Guardian*. 23 May 2021. **https://www.theguardian.com/world/2021/may/23/israel-apartheid-boycotts-sanctions-south-africa**.
14. Skipping school	"Greta Thunberg." Encyclopaedia Britannica. **https://www.britannica.com/biography/Greta-Thunberg**.
15. Walking to work	Namiti, Musaazi. "Uganda walk-to-work protests kick up dust." Al Jazeera. 28 April 2011. **https://www.aljazeera.com/features/2011/4/28/uganda-walk-to-work-protests-kick-up-dust**.

16. Making art	Murray, Elizabeth. “How Art Helped Propel Sudan’s Revolution.” United States Institute of Peace. 12 November 2020. **https://www.usip.org/blog/2020/11/how-art-helped-propel-sudans-revolution**.
17. Going into the ocean	Rashid, Jasmine. “Florida wade-ins to end racial segregation of public beach and pools (Civil Rights Movement) 1945-1964.” Global Nonviolent Action Database. 30 January 2015. **https://nvdatabase.swarthmore.edu/content/florida-wade-ins-end-racial-segregation-public-beach-and-pools-civil-rights-movement-1945-19**.
18. Burning a flag	“Texas v. Johnson.” Encyclopaedia Britannica. **https://www.britannica.com/event/Texas-v-Johnson**.
19. Refusing to leave your home	Cockburn, Alexander. “The Shame Continues at Big Mountain.” *The Los Angeles Times*. 27 April 1997. **https://www.latimes.com/archives/la-xpm-1997-04-27-op-52937-story.html**.
20. Rejecting the draft	Zirin, Dave. “June 20, 1967: Muhammad Ali Convicted for Refusing the Vietnam Draft.” Zinn Education Project. **https://www.zinnedproject.org/news/tdih/-muhammad-ali-convicted-refusing-vietnam-draft**.

RESOURCES

Woven Teaching

Human Rights Education
woventeaching.org/human-rights-education

Learn more about Human Rights Education, a pedagogy rooted in advancing human rights through teaching that promotes cooperation, respect, and the dignity of all people.

Universal Declaration of Human Rights
woventeaching.org/udhr

From this page, students can access information about the history of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, as well as full text and student versions of the document.

Timothy Snyder

On Tyranny: Twenty Lessons from the Twentieth Century
New York: Tim Duggan Books, 2017

The framework created by Professor Timothy Snyder in *On Tyranny: Twenty Lessons from the Twentieth Century* provides the basis for the *Defending Democracy* curriculum.

Lesson 13: Practice Corporeal Politics
youtu.be/laRlf1QXYek

In 2021, Timothy Snyder created a series of videos about *On Tyranny*, providing an updated perspective on the book's lessons.

Activities

Activist Handbook
activisthandbook.org

The Activist Handbook is a collection of crowdsourced information about activism and organizing from around the world. The site contains more than 450 guides on organizing, strategy, and more.

Youth Activism Toolkit
Advocates for Youth
advocatesforyouth.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/04/Youth-Activist-Toolkit.pdf

This toolkit offers guidance for youth organizers on building and sustaining power, messaging, tactics, and more.

15 Examples of Civil Disobedience
Human Rights Careers
humanrightscareers.com/issues/examples-civil-disobedience

This list from Human Rights Careers includes additional forms of civil disobedience. The website also includes online courses and information on working in the field of human rights.

HANDOUT EXAMPLES OF CIVIL DISOBEDIENCE

The following are civil disobedience strategies from around the world. There are many ways to practice civil disobedience–far more than this handout could contain. You can learn more about other civil disobedience strategies on the Global Nonviolent Action Database at **https://nvdatabase.swarthmore.edu**.

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1. **Meeting in a plaza - Argentina (1977)**
   Gathering as a group in a public space can be a form of civil disobedience. In 1977, a group of mothers gathered in the Plaza de Mayo in Buenos Aires, Argentina. They were petitioning the government to release information about their children who had been "disappeared"–abducted by the government, never to be seen or heard from again. The military dictatorship that the mothers were protesting ended in 1983; however, the Mothers of the Plaza de Mayo and their supporters still gather in the plaza weekly to demand information about the victims and to hold perpetrators accountable for their crimes.

2. **Graffiti - Australia (1978)**
   Vandalism (damage to or destruction of property) can be a form of civil disobedience. During the 1970s, the tobacco industry in Australia was allowed to advertise anywhere. A group of activists, understanding the harms of tobacco use, decided to take direct action against tobacco advertising. They founded BUGA UP (Billboard Utilising Graffitists Against Unhealthy Promotions) and began a campaign to alter tobacco billboards across the country. In one example, they changed the word "Marlboro" on the billboard to instead say "it's a bore." In 1992, the government of Australia made nearly all tobacco advertising illegal.

3. **Walking off a job - Canada (1972)**
   Labor strikes are a common form of civil disobedience. In March 1972, three labor federations in Quebec, Canada joined forces to create an alliance known as the Common Front. Workers in this alliance made several demands of the government: a wage increase, greater job security, and equal treatment for men and women. The government refused to consider their demands, so the following month, workers (including teachers, hospital workers, and construction workers) walked off of the job. Around 300,000 workers participated in the strike, making it one of the largest in North American history.

4. **Blocking roads - Chile (2011)**
   A common tactic around the world, blocking roads is a form of civil disobedience. Southern Patagonia is a remote region in Chile that gets very cold in the winter. Residents rely on subsidies from the government to afford the cost of the gas needed to heat their homes. In December 2010, the National Petroleum Company announced that it was raising gas prices by nearly 17 percent and it would not negotiate. Residents of Patagonia blockaded road traffic in protest, leaving thousands of tourists stranded. The following month, the government negotiated with residents, bringing the increase down to 3 percent and reimbursing low income families so that they saw no increase in the cost of gas.

5. **Refusing to disperse when ordered - China (1989)**
   If people are ordered to leave from a public space by government or police forces, remaining in place is a form of civil disobedience. Beginning in April 1989, pro-democracy protesters (mostly students) gathered in Beijing's Tiananmen Square. These protesters

wanted economic and political change. The protesters and the Chinese government were not able to reach a resolution through negotiations. In June, the government deployed troops to Tiananmen Square, resulting in violent clashes that left many protesters dead. Many protesters left, but thousands remained and protests continued in the streets. There are no official death tolls of the events on Tiananmen Square, but it is estimated that several hundred to a few thousand protesters were killed.

6. **Hunger striking - Cuba/United States (2013)**
   Guantanamo Bay detention camp is a US military prison located on the coast of Cuba. It was established in 2002 to hold people suspected of terrorism. Most of the prisoners ever held at Guantanamo were there for years without being charged with a crime. Many felt a hunger strike–a form of civil disobedience in which a person refuses food until their demands are met–was their only option to protest. In 2013, Muslim prisoners began a hunger strike in response to members of the US military searching through their Qurans. At its peak, 106 of the 133 prisoners at Guantanamo Bay were striking.

7. **Making salt - India (1930)**
   British control of India began in the 18th century. In 1882, the British rulers made it illegal for Indians to collect or sell salt, forcing them to buy it from the British at high prices. The poorest people in India suffered greatly from the salt tax. In 1930, Mahatma Gandhi began the Salt March. During this act of civil disobedience, he and his supporters walked nearly 250 miles, collecting salt from seawater along the coast of India. Inspired by this, people engaged in other acts of civil disobedience and Gandhi, along with more than 60,000 others, were arrested.

8. **Tree sitting - New Zealand (1978)**
   Pureora Forest is a biodiverse rainforest in New Zealand. In the 1970s, people started cutting down the forest, using it as a resource for the logging industry. Environmental activists were concerned about the destruction of the forest, so in 1978 they built platforms among the trees and occupied the branches so that people could not safely cut down the trees. This was the first instance of tree sitting as a form of civil disobedience. The government responded to the protest and imposed a moratorium on logging in the area. Eventually, the forest was declared a protected area.

9. **Blocking construction equipment - Palestine (2010)**
   Some methods of civil disobedience are more dangerous than others. Blocking vehicles and construction equipment is a form of civil disobedience that forces an activist to "put their body on the line." In the village of Budrus in the West Bank region of Palestine, this is precisely what activists did. In 2004, Israel announced the construction of a 26-foot high wall. One section of it would require the destruction of thousands of olive trees in Budrus. On the day the construction equipment arrived, Palestinians marched to the site and put their bodies in front of the bulldozers. Eventually, Israel changed the wall's route away from the olive trees of Budrus.

10. **Withholding sex - Philippines (2011)**
    A sex strike is a form of civil disobedience, usually held by women, in which people withhold sex until their demands are met. In 2011, members of a sewing cooperative in Dado, a small village in the Philippines, held a sex strike. The village had been the site of violence for decades from separatist groups. When a local road was closed due to violence, Dado became cut off from local trading centers and the women of the sewing cooperative could

not travel to sell their products. They decided to withhold sex from their husbands until there was peace in the village. Soon after, the husbands met with village leaders and brought an end to the fighting.

11. **Building a structure - Puerto Rico (1970)**
    Puerto Rico is a territory of the United States. Following World War II, the US Navy used the island of Culebra, Puerto Rico for military practice exercises–including aerial bombardment. The training exercises and shellings put the lives of Culebra's residents in danger. In 1970, the Navy tried to evict the residents of Culebra. Demonstrators protested on the beaches. One group built a chapel on a beach as a form of civil disobedience, holding services while the Navy attempted to conduct target practice. This forced the Navy to halt their exercises. Eventually the chapel was torn down, but protests continued. In 1974, President Nixon ordered the Navy to relocate its shelling activities.

12. **Driving - Saudi Arabia (1990)**
    Everyday tasks such as driving can be a form of civil disobedience. Until 2018, women were not allowed to drive in Saudi Arabia; however, women have occasionally protested by getting behind the wheel. The first of these protests happened in 1990, when 47 women drove cars through the streets of Riyadh, the capital city. The women were taken into custody and were only released once male relatives signed pledges promising that the women would not drive again.

13. **Boycotting products - South Africa (1959)**
    Boycotting companies is a common form of civil disobedience. During a boycott, people refuse to buy products from certain companies or countries engaged in human rights abuses. As part of the movement against Apartheid, which protested South Africa's system of racial segregation, people around the world stopped buying South African products. Activists also picketed outside of stores that carried products from South Africa. By the mid-1980s, approximately 25 percent of the British population was boycotting South African goods. The boycott was in place for 35 years, ending in 1993 when South Africa was preparing for democratic elections.

14. **Skipping school - Sweden (2018)**
    Similar to how workers might strike, students can engage in civil disobedience by refusing to go to school. This is what Swedish teen Greta Thunberg did in 2018. Concerned about the climate crisis, Greta skipped school for nearly three weeks before the Swedish election in the fall of 2018. During her protest, she held a sign that read, "*Skolstrejk för Klimatet*" (School Strike for Climate). After the election, she returned to school but continued striking on Fridays, calling these days "Fridays for Future." Since her initial protest, hundreds of thousands of students have participated in Fridays for Future, urging governments to take serious steps to address climate change.

15. **Walking to work - Uganda (2011)**
    An action as simple as walking can be a form of civil disobedience. In April 2011, people in Uganda did just that–took up walking as a form of protest against rising prices of fuel and food in their country. Following the presidential election, activists called on people to walk to work in order to draw attention to the high cost of transportation–fuel costs had risen 50 percent over the previous four months. The government declared these walks as unlawful assemblies. Police used tear gas and live ammunition on protesters.

16. **Making art - Sudan (2019)**
    At the end of 2018, mass protests broke out in Sudan over the cost of food and other economic issues. Several months later, demonstrations would lead to the military overthrow of President Omar al-Bashir, who was in power for almost 30 years. During this period, people used art to spread the symbols of revolution throughout the country. Outdoor murals sprung up all over, including many with revolutionary messages such as, “you were born free, so live free.” Murals also highlighted the role of women in organizing and leading protests. Art has long been used as a form of civil disobedience.

17. **Going into the ocean - USA (1955)**
    Sometimes recreational activities can be a form of civil disobedience. During the 1940s, Black people in Florida were largely unable to go to the beach or a public swimming pool due to racial segregation. In 1955, 100 Black Floridians showed up to white-exclusive Lido beach near Sarasota and staged a wade-in. By 1961, wade-ins became more frequent throughout Florida, both at beaches and swimming pools. Police and white onlookers often responded with violence toward the protesters.

18. **Burning a flag - USA (1984)**
    In 1984, Gregory Lee Johnson burned a flag during the Republican National Convention in Dallas, Texas. Johnson was part of a group protesting the policies of US President Ronald Reagan. In front of Dallas City Hall, Johnson threw kerosene on the flag and set it on fire. No one was injured, but Johnson was charged with flag desecration, which most states had made illegal during the Vietnam War. He was sentenced to one year in jail and a $2,000 fine. He challenged this, and the case eventually made it to the US Supreme Court. The Court ruled that flag burning is protected under the First Amendment to the US Constitution.

19. **Refusing to leave your home - USA (1996)**
    Sometimes refusing to leave your home can be a form of civil disobedience. Since 1882, the US government and the Hopi and Navajo nations have disputed the land on the Big Mountain reservation in Arizona. The area is rich in coal deposits, and by the 1970s mining had increased greatly, so the US government signed an agreement that allowed a private company to use the land without restrictions. Natives in the area were pressured to give up their land and relocate. From 1993 to 1996, 300 Hopi and Navajo families refused to leave. Eventually, a federal judge ruled that the company was violating the rights of the residents; however, disputes between the Hopi and Navajo peoples and mining companies continue today.

20. **Rejecting the draft - USA (1966)**
    Refusing to participate, especially in government-mandated activities, can be a form of civil disobedience. During the Vietnam War, famous American boxer Muhammad Ali was convicted for refusing to be drafted into the US military. In 1967, Ali showed up to his appointment to be inducted into the military, but three times he refused to step forward when they called his name. He was arrested and eventually sentenced to five years in prison. He remained free while his case was in appeals, and his conviction was overturned by the US Supreme Court in 1971.

HANDOUT MOVEMENT STRATEGIES NOTE CATCHER

My case study is about...	_____ *(partner's name)* 's case study is about...
Strategies I notice in the activism:	Strategies they notice in the activism:
Thoughts and questions I have:	Thoughts and questions I have:
_____ *(partner's name)* 's case study is about...	_____ *(partner's name)* 's case study is about...
Strategies they notice in the activism:	Strategies they notice in the activism:
Thoughts and questions I have:	Thoughts and questions I have:
Similarities and differences we noticed:	

LESSON 14: LEARN FROM PEERS IN OTHER COUNTRIES

BUILD POWER ACROSS BORDERS

> Learn from peers in other countries. Keep up friendships abroad, or make new friends in other countries. The present difficulties in the United States are an element of a larger trend. And no country is going to find a solution by itself. Make sure you and your family have passports."
>
> *On Tyranny,* Chapter 16 (p. 95)

OVERVIEW

Content Level	Ages 14-18 (Grades 9-12)
Time	50 Minutes

Description	This lesson is designed to fit into one class period. Teachers should make adjustments as needed to meet the needs of their students. The lesson includes:
	• 3 Activities
	  • Individual geographic mapping activity of students' social media feeds
	  • All-class discussion about the tangible benefits of peer-to-peer global learning and exchanges
	  • Small group research on and presentation of youth-led social change organizations
	• Exit Card Prompts
	• 1 Extension Activity

Guiding Questions	• What can we learn from peers in other countries and why is it important to do so? • How are youth leading and participating in local or transnational efforts that advance inclusion, human rights, and democracy? • What actions can we take to advance justice, human rights, and uphold democracy in our own countries?
Learning Objectives	At the end of this lesson, students will be able to: • Name and identify specific youth-led organizations from across the globe that aim to advance inclusion, human rights, and democratic societies. • Understand and articulate why learning from peers in other countries is important. • Commit to one action they can take that is inspired by their peers in other countries.

Materials	• **Google Slides deck** (optional)
	• Digital Document: **Strengthening youth-led organisations in Rio de Janeiro** (YOUCA Brasil)
	• List: Youth-Led Organizations Around the World (see p. **188**)
	• Student Handouts (also available digitally via **Google Docs**)
	  » **Mapping My Feed**
	  » **Youth Organizing Around the World**
	• Computer/internet access for small groups
	• Index cards or small slips of paper
	• Markers/colored pencils
	• Notebooks/journals
	• Students' smartphones with social media apps
	• Optional
	  » **Key Terms – Democracy and Authoritarianism**
	  » **Universal Declaration on Human Rights – Student Version**

Common Core Standards *Learn more at **corestandards.org**.*	Reading • CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.R.7 Speaking & Listening • CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.SL.4	Writing • CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.4 • CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.9
Social Justice Standards *These standards were created by Learning for Justice. Learn more at **bit.ly/LFJ-standards**.*	Identity • ID.9-12.5 Diversity • DI.9-12.6 • DI.9-12.8	Justice • JU.9-12.11 • JU.9-12.15 Action • AC.9-12.20

INTRODUCTION

In his book *On Tyranny: Twenty Lessons from the Twentieth Century*, Historian and Yale University Professor Timothy Snyder offers practical actions that individuals can take to help stop the spread of authoritarianism. One of the book's lessons, "Learn from peers in other countries," encourages individuals to connect with people globally, especially those who have experienced authoritarianism and resist(ed) it.

Through this lesson, students learn from peers in other countries by studying youth-led organizations that advocate for human rights, democratic values, and more inclusive and just societies. By learning about and from international peers, students are invited to be inspired by others and to reflect on their own power and agency to influence and change society for the better. Students are also invited to reflect on and broaden their social media intake to include peers in other countries who are advocating for better futures for all.

"Learn from peers in other countries" is Chapter 16 in *On Tyranny*, pages 95-98.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

This lesson was written by Danièle Fogel with support from Woven Teaching. We are very grateful for her contributions to *Defending Democracy*. For more information about Danièle, see Appendix, p. **212**.

FOCUS ON HUMAN RIGHTS

Woven Teaching believes that **human rights education** is essential for students to understand and assert their own rights and to protect the rights of others. As a result, the **Universal Declaration of Human Rights** (UDHR) lies at the core of Woven Teaching's materials. The document's 30 articles outline fundamental human rights: basic rights and freedoms which every human being is entitled to, regardless of race, religion, birthplace, gender, sexual orientation, or other characteristics. Although its articles are not legally binding, the UDHR serves as a moral compass for the international community.

The activities in this lesson connect directly to several UDHR articles, including:

- **Article 3**: Right to life, freedom, and safety.
- **Article 20**: Right to participate in organizations and organize peaceful protests and meetings.
- **Article 25**: Right to an adequate standard of living.
- **Article 30**: Human rights belong to you; no one can take away your human rights.

ACTIVITIES

1 WHO ARE YOU LEARNING FROM? *10 MINUTES*

Students will reflect on their social media feeds and the geographic distribution of their social media intake.

Materials

- **Google Slides deck** (optional)
- Student Handout: Mapping My Feed (**Handout A**)
- Markers/colored pencils
- Notebooks/journals
- Students' smartphones with social media apps

Procedure

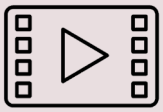
1. Explain that in this first activity, students will examine their social networks and should pull out their phones.

2. Distribute one copy of Mapping My Feed (**Handout A**) and a marker or colored pencil to each student. Invite students to reflect on their social media feeds and their social media intake through freewriting and mapping by answering the prompts below:
    - What are the main topics that you engage with or learn about via social media? This can include what you view, what you post, and what you send to or receive from others.
    - What is the general age range of the people you follow and learn from on social media?
    - Where are these people located? Where are they in the world? Use a marker on your map to place the people you follow, in order to better visualize where in the world your social media intake is coming from.

    Note: If phones are not allowed in school, you might ask students to either do this activity from memory or as a preparatory homework assignment. If students do not have social media, ask them to consider where they get their news, the places they hear about in the news, or where the authors of their favorite books are from.

3. Bring the class together and ask a few students to share their reflections.

TIMOTHY SNYDER SPEAKS: *ON TYRANNY*



Timothy Snyder's **YouTube channel** includes a **video** (6:32) on this and each of the other 19 points in *On Tyranny*. If you have time to do so, you may wish to include this video in the lesson with the following discussion questions:

- Snyder says, "The idea that your country is always and in everything better than other countries, the idea that your country, for example, is automatically a democracy no matter what happens, is doom. And that idea almost doomed us." What does he mean?
- How is it helpful in safeguarding democracy at home to stay informed about what is happening in other countries?

*Technology-free classroom? A transcript for this video is available via **Google Docs**.*

2 CONNECTING ACROSS BORDERS *10 MINUTES*

Students will learn about the work of a youth-led organization in Brazil and consider the benefits of connecting with and learning from people and organizations across the globe.

Materials

- **Google Slides deck** (optional)
- Digital Document: "**Strengthening youth-led organisations in Rio de Janeiro**" (YOUCA Brasil)

Procedure

1. Begin by sharing the following information:

   In the book On Tyranny*, Timothy Snyder states that learning from peers in other countries is important in countering authoritarianism and defending democracy. He argues that, by connecting with others around the globe, we can learn from each other to defend democracy and counter threats of authoritarianism. He states:*

   "American democracy [...] demands sustained attention to the world around us, so that we know what we are resisting, and how best to do so. It allows us to see how other people, sometimes wiser than we, react to similar problems. Since so much of what has happened in the last year is familiar to the rest of the world or from recent history, we must observe and listen" (98).

2. Briefly ask students to deconstruct and draw meaning from this quote, focusing on why it is beneficial and important to learn from peers in other countries.

3. Give a tangible example of how learning from peers in other countries can be beneficial. As a whole class, skim "**Strengthening youth-led organisations in Rio de Janeiro**" from youth organization YOUCA Brasil.[1]

   This example shows how a peer-to-peer exchange between young people in Brazil and Belgium led to the establishment of a youth-led organization in Brazil that works to advance the rights of young people and their inclusion in local and national policies and practices.

4. Discuss the importance of learning from peers in other countries using the following discussion prompts:
   - How did youth benefit from learning from peers in other countries in this example?
   - What was the outcome for youth in Brazil?
   - How do you think youth in Belgium benefited from this exchange?
   - What does this example teach us about the importance of learning from peers in other countries?

[1] Find out more information about this partnership, and on how YOUCA Brasil evolved as an organization. Website at **https://youcabrasil.mystrikingly.com/**. The website is in Portuguese, but students could use Google Translate to find out more. If your school offers Portuguese as a language, this translation/comprehension activity could be done in conjunction with the Portuguese class.

3 YOUTH ORGANIZING AROUND THE WORLD *25 MINUTES*

Students will work in small groups to explore how youth are defending democracy, advancing human rights, and countering authoritarianism around the world.

Materials

- **Google Slides deck** (optional)
- List: Youth-Led Organizations Around the World (see p. **188**; also available via **Google Docs**)
- Student Handout: Youth Organizing Around the World worksheet (**Handout B**)
- Computer/internet access for small groups
- Optional
  - » **Key Terms – Democracy and Authoritarianism**
  - » **Universal Declaration of Human Rights – Student Version**

Procedure

1. Divide students into small groups and assign each group a youth-led organization from across the globe (see Youth Organizations, p. **188**).
   - Youth Vs Apocalypse (United States)
   - Jijenge Youth Organisation (Kenya)
   - Inclusive Bangladesh (Bangladesh)
   - Engajamundo (Brazil)
   - Palestinian Youth Movement (United States and Canada)

2. Distribute one copy of the Youth Organizing Around the World worksheet (**Handout B**) to each group. Instruct each group to work together to research and analyze their assigned organization. Students should use the worksheet to guide their exploration and facilitate their understanding of their assigned organization.

   Each group should designate a recorder (person to take notes on the reflection questions) and a reporter (person to report back to the whole class). The recorder is responsible for writing the group's responses on the worksheet.

3. Bring students together and ask the reporter from each group to share what they learned through a short presentation to the class about their assigned organization.

   *Note: Other options for presenting include a **gallery walk** or a **jigsaw activity**.*

4. Engage the class in a short debrief discussion of what they learned through the previous activity using the following questions:
   - What did you learn from your peers in other countries?
   - What were you surprised by?
   - What excited you when learning about your assigned organization or another group's organization?
   - What trends did you observe across the organizations?
   - What differences did you observe across the organizations?
   - Anything else that you noticed?

YOUTH-LED ORGANIZATIONS AROUND THE WORLD

*This list is also available digitally via **Google Docs**.*

- **Organization 1: Youth Vs Apocalypse**

  Youth Vs Apocalypse is a youth-based climate justice organization in the San Francisco Bay Area (California, USA) that lifts voices of youth of color and youth from working class backgrounds and advocates for a "livable climate" and a more just world.

  Website: **https://www.youthvsapocalypse.org**

- **Organization 2: Jijenge Youth Organisation**

  Jijenge Youth Organisation is a youth-led non-profit organization based in Kenya that focuses on making effective social change and promoting economic and social development with a focus on children, youth, and women.

  Website: **https://jijengeyouth.org**

- **Organization 3: Inclusive Bangladesh**

  Inclusive Bangladesh is a transgender, LGBTQIA+ youth-led organization in Bangladesh and the United Kingdom (UK) that advocates for human rights and a more inclusive, just, and peaceful society.

  Website: **https://www.inclusivebangla.org**

- **Organization 4: Engajamundo**

  Engajamundo is a youth-led Brazilian organization that focuses on social and environmental issues and aims to promote political engagement of young people to positively impact policy.

  Website: **https://engajamundo.org**

- **Organization 5: Palestinian Youth Movement**

  Palestinian Youth Movement is a transnational grassroots movement in the United States and Canada that advocates for justice and liberation for Palestine and Palestinian people.

  Website: **https://palestinianyouthmovement.com**

  Note on the use of the term "anti-Zionism": anti-Zionism is a term that is used very broadly, and different people assign it vastly different meanings. To some, anti-Zionism means the denial of the right to self-determination for the Jewish people. This means that some people consider Anti-Zionism to be an inherently antisemitic term and stance. To others, anti-Zionism means fair and warranted criticism and condemnation of many Israeli policies and practices, including the treatment of Palestinians, the occupation of Palestinian lands, and the ongoing conflicts in Gaza, the West Bank, and surrounding countries. Teachers should be aware of the sensitive nature of this term and this topic and discuss with students before assigning this activity.

4 CLOSING: EXIT CARD *5 MINUTES*

Students will complete an exit card, reflecting on what they've learned about and from their peers in other countries, as well as what they have learned about themselves.

Materials

- **Google Slides deck** (optional)
- Index cards or small slips of paper

Procedure

1. Prompt students to think about what they learned about peers in other countries from today's lesson. Also prompt students to think about what they may have learned about themselves, either in terms of the power of youth to influence society (their own power), or the geographic location of their daily media intake.

2. Instruct students to complete a 3-2-1 exit card:
    - Write 3 things you learned from peers in other countries today.
    - Write 2 things you learned about peers in your own classroom and/or what you learned about yourself.
    - Write 1 action item you will take to continue learning from peers in other countries.

3. You may wish to begin the next class session by reading some of the student responses (anonymously) or by answering questions they shared.

EXTENSION ACTIVITY: EVALUATING AND EXPANDING OUR SOCIAL MEDIA FEEDS

Students will expand their social media feeds by following peers in other countries and considering concrete ways to support their work.

Materials

- Smartphones with social media access
- Google Sheets or Google Docs (optional)

Procedure

1. Have students return to their writing from Activity 1 and focus on the geographic location of the people they follow/interact with on social media. Have students add to their writing, considering the following questions:
    - How international is your feed?
    - How much are you learning from your peers in other countries through your social media feed?

2. Instruct students to take out their phones and expand their social media feeds to include a broader international audience if theirs is not already global.
    a. If students are interested in following their work, ask students to find the organizations from today's class (see p. **188**) or the young people involved in these organizations and follow them.
    b. Solicit accounts from students' existing feeds that are global in nature and that are of young people fighting for human rights, justice, or democracy worldwide, and share those accounts with the whole class.

    Note: In the case of phones note being allowed in school/class, students could also make a collective spreadsheet (or physical list) with the handles of their peers in other countries, particularly those who are working to advance human rights, democracy, or other social causes in other countries.

3. Engage in a brief discussion about how students can take actions that might help them become more aware of human rights issues and efforts from peers in other countries to defend democracy.
    - How can you take other actions that might help you become more aware of other human rights issues or causes that get less mainstream media attention?
      Possible responses: Repost from peers in other countries to amplify the cause, start fundraisers for various causes that could use financial/material support (depending on students' backgrounds).

      Note: If applicable, engage in a conversation about how to amplify in a way that doesn't perpetuate the act of helping someone in a self-serving way, i.e., saviorism.
    - How else might you learn from peers in other countries, or simply be more connected to people your age in other countries?

RESOURCES

Woven Teaching

Human Rights Education
woventeaching.org/human-rights-education

Learn more about Human Rights Education, a pedagogy rooted in advancing human rights through teaching that promotes cooperation, respect, and the dignity of all people.

Universal Declaration of Human Rights
woventeaching.org/udhr

From this page, students can access information about the history of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, as well as full text and student versions of the document.

Timothy Snyder

On Tyranny: Twenty Lessons from the Twentieth Century
New York: Tim Duggan Books, 2017

The framework created by Professor Timothy Snyder in *On Tyranny: Twenty Lessons from the Twentieth Century* provides the basis for the *Defending Democracy* curriculum.

Lesson 16: Learn From Peers In Other Countries
youtu.be/CLJihII6P6k

In 2021, Timothy Snyder created a series of videos about *On Tyranny*, providing an updated perspective on the book's lessons.

Activities

Youth Power for Youth Rights Toolkit
Amnesty International
amnesty.org/en/youth

International human rights organization Amnesty International has put together a toolkit that outlines steps that youth organizers can take to create a successful social change campaign.

Youth Activism Through a Global Lens
The Forge
forgeorganizing.org/issues/youth-activism-through-global-lens

This series highlights youth organizers from around the world. Its authors conduct interviews with the organizers themselves, providing an opportunity for youth to hear directly from their peers.

HANDOUT MAPPING MY FEED

Use a pen or marker to indicate where the people/accounts you engage with on social media are from.

HANDOUT YOUTH ORGANIZING AROUND THE WORLD

Organization name: _____

Where in the world does the organization do its work?	Who is the organization run by? *(Include people and age range if you can tell.)*
What is the organization's main focus? What is its goal, mission, and vision? *(Put as much of this in your own words as possible.)*	
Describe the significant campaigns or activities conducted by the organization.	Describe how the organization's campaigns/activities contribute to advancing democracy or human rights. How do the campaigns/activities contribute to countering authoritarianism? *(You may use a list of* **key terms related to democracy and authoritarianism** *or the* ***Universal Declaration of Human Rights****)*

Group Reflection
Prior to this research, did you know about this organization or the issues that it works on?
Even if this organization is far from where you live, what connections can you make to your own locality and the issues that you or those around you face?
What is your main takeaway after learning about this organization (one response per group member)? *You can list something that stood out to you, something that surprised you, something that made you think more deeply, a connection that you made, or anything else that you're taking away.*

LESSON 15: BE A GLOBAL CITIZEN AND BE AS COURAGEOUS AS YOU CAN

SHOW SOLIDARITY AND SET AN EXAMPLE

> Be a patriot. Set a good example of what America means for generations to come. They will need it."
>
> *On Tyranny,* Chapter 19 (p. 111)

> Be as courageous as you can. If none of us is prepared to die for freedom, then all of us will die under tyranny."
>
> *On Tyranny,* Chapter 20 (p. 115)

OVERVIEW

Content Level	Ages 14-18 (Grades 9-12)
Time	50 Minutes

Description	This lesson is designed to fit into one class period. Teachers should make adjustments as needed to meet the needs of their students. The lesson includes:
	• 4 Activities
	  • All-class video review and discussion on the meaning of patriotism
	  • All-class Opinion Continuum activity in which students share their opinions on patriotism
	  • Small group reading, discussion, and report back about a youth activist
	  • Think-Pair-Share about courageous acts
	• Exit Card Prompts
	• 2 Extension Activities

Guiding Questions	• What is patriotism? • What are the elements of global citizenship? • What does courage mean to you? • Who are some young people that are global citizens, and what are the ways in which they have shown courage in the face of adversity?
Learning Objectives	At the end of this lesson, students will be able to: • Define patriotism, reflect on what patriotism means to them, and understand what patriotism means to others. • Recognize what global citizenship is and the role it plays in our world. • Understand the ways that people can be courageous. • Identify small, courageous actions they can take in their own lives.

Materials	• **Google Slides deck** (optional)
	• **Opinion Continuum signs**
	• Video: "**We Are America**" (3:37, Love Has No Labels)
	• Student Handouts (also available digitally via **Google Docs**)
	  » **Global Citizen Profiles**
	  » **Global Citizen Group Reflection**

Common Core Standards *Learn more at* ***corestandards.org***.	Speaking & Listening • CCSS.ELA-Literacy.SL.1 • CCSS.ELA-Literacy.SL.3	Reading: Informational Text • CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.1
Social Justice Standards *These standards were created by Learning for Justice. Learn more at* ***bit.ly/LFJ-standards***.	Diversity • DI.9-12.6 • DI.9-12.8 • DI.9-12.9 Justice • JU.9-12.12 • JU.9-12.15	Action • AC.9-12.17 • AC.9-12.20

INTRODUCTION

In his book *On Tyranny: Twenty Lessons from the Twentieth Century*, Historian and Yale University Professor Timothy Snyder offers practical actions that individuals can take to help stop the spread of authoritarianism. The book's final lessons, "Be a patriot" and "Be as courageous as you can," compel us to fight against tyranny and protect democracy by setting a good example of what it means to be a real patriot and to summon as much courage as we can.

Building a culture of human rights also requires us to become global citizens—to acknowledge that our rights and dignity are only as safe as they are for others elsewhere. We must work together to create the conditions to ensure that all people, everywhere, are able to exercise their rights. By doing so, we can become global citizens and human rights defenders–activists promoting human rights.[1]

This lesson provides an opportunity for students to explore what patriotism is and what it means to them. It also allows them to understand the role of global citizens in fostering an equitable and sustainable world, and reflect on the importance of individual courage in protecting democracy and global society.

"Be a patriot" and "Be as courageous as you can" are Chapter 19 and 20 in *On Tyranny*, pages 111-115.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

This lesson was written by Jinnie Spiegler with support from Woven Teaching. We are very grateful for her contributions to *Defending Democracy*. For more information about Jinnie, see Appendix, p. **213**.

FOCUS ON HUMAN RIGHTS

Woven Teaching believes that **human rights education** is essential for students to understand and assert their own rights and to protect the rights of others. As a result, the **Universal Declaration of Human Rights** (UDHR) lies at the core of Woven Teaching's materials. The document's 30 articles outline fundamental human rights: basic rights and freedoms which every human being is entitled to, regardless of race, religion, birthplace, gender, sexual orientation, or other characteristics. Although its articles are not legally binding, the UDHR serves as a moral compass for the international community.

The activities in this lesson connect directly to several UDHR articles, including:

- **Article 3**: Right to life, freedom, and safety.
- **Article 26**: Right to education.
- **Article 29**: Right to be supported by your community and a duty to do the same.

[1] To learn more about human rights defenders, see "Being a Human Rights Defender" in *Human Rights Are for Everyone: A Guide to Teaching for Positive Change*, p. 18-21. Available at **https://www.woventeaching.org/download/direct/human-rights-are-for-everyone**.

ACTIVITIES

1 WHO IS AMERICA? *5 MINUTES*

Students will watch a short video and consider what it means to be patriotic in the United States of America.

Materials

- **Google Slides deck** (optional)
- Video: "**We Are America**" (3:37, Love Has No Labels)

Procedure

1. Begin by showing "**We Are America**" (3:37). Explain that the video was launched by the Ad Council and Love Has No Labels on Independence Day (4th of July) in 2016. The video features World Wrestling Entertainment (WWE) star John Cena and aims to celebrate love and acceptance for all communities.

   *Note: Technology-free classroom? A transcript for this video is available via **Google Docs**.*

TEACHING TIP

If you are teaching outside the United States, this activity can be adapted by connecting the video's themes of acceptance and inclusivity to your country's laws, policies, and society.

2. After watching the video, engage students in a brief discussion by asking the following questions:
   - What does Cena say about the contradictions of the word *patriotism*?
   - When Cena asks viewers to picture the "average US citizen," who initially came to your mind? How was who you pictured similar to or different from the average US citizen that Cena describes?
   - What surprised you about the statistics that Cena cited regarding the identity demographics of the US?
   - Cena poses the question that if patriotism is love of country, what is it that we love about the US? What do you love most about the US? What does patriotism mean to you?
   - What is your main takeaway from watching the video?

3. Summarize that the message of the video is that patriotism should be about love, not just pride in one's country, and that to love America is to love all Americans. The video helps to challenge the traditional concept of patriotism.

2 WHAT IS PATRIOTISM? *15 MINUTES*

Students will participate in an Opinion Continuum activity to share their opinions on what constitutes patriotism.

Materials

- **Google Slides deck** (optional)
- **Opinion Continuum signs**
- Computer/internet access for each student (optional)

Procedure

1. Preparation: Print the **Opinion Continuum signs**. Create an imaginary line around your classroom, with one point representing an "I totally agree" response and the farthest other point representing an "I totally disagree" response. Post the appropriate Opinion Continuum signs at these extremities. In between, place the "I agree," "Not sure," and "I disagree" signs along the continuum.

2. Begin by asking: *What is patriotism? How would you define patriotism?* Elicit ideas from students in the class. If you allow phones or computers in your classroom, invite students to look up different definitions. Record students' ideas on the board. Decide on a definition of patriotism based on students' responses. Alternately, you can use the following definition:

   patriotism: *a feeling of love, devotion, pride, and a sense of attachment to one's country*

3. Engage students in an Opinion Continuum activity. Explain that students will hear several statements about patriotism and will respond with the extent to which they agree or disagree with each statement. This activity is meant to help them explore and reflect on what patriotism means to them and their peers.

4. Choose 4-7 of the statements below, or more if time permits. Read each statement one at a time, inviting students to decide where they stand on the continuum in response to the statement read. For each statement, students should move silently along the continuum, choosing a spot that reflects their opinion. Give students some time after choosing their own place to look around and observe where their peers chose to stand.

TEACHING TIP

If your classroom space won't accommodate the physical opinion continuum, you can have students use thumbs up for "agree," thumbs down for "disagree" and thumbs to the side for "not sure." Or, if you prefer to use a digital version, use **Mentimeter** ("Scales" format) to create the continuum and provide the same selection of words—totally agree, disagree, etc.—inviting students to select a response based on each statement.

5. Following each statement, after everyone has chosen their spot, ask students to talk with people around them for 1-2 minutes about why they are positioned where they are. Then have some students share their thoughts with the whole class. If students have changed their opinion after hearing their peers' thoughts, you can allow them to move around the room to a new spot that reflects their updated opinion and ask them to explain their reasoning.

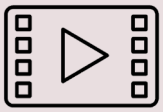
6. Reconvene the class and engage students in a discussion by asking some or all of the following questions:
   - What was it like for you to do this activity?
   - Were some statements more difficult than others to decide where to stand? Why?
   - What did you learn about patriotism by doing this activity?
   - What did you learn about yourself? What did you learn about others?
   - What questions do you have about patriotism?
   - How do your reflections on patriotism relate (or not) to the video we watched earlier?

OPINION CONTINUUM STATEMENTS

Patriotism is...

- registering to vote and voting regularly.
- displaying a flag on your car, in your yard, or on what you wear (clothing and accessories).
- questioning and critiquing the policies and decisions of your country's government.
- celebrating national holidays that honor the country's history and achievements.
- believing your country is superior to other countries.
- participating in protests to fight injustice in your country.
- supporting a war your country is in, no matter what.
- accepting and appreciating the diversity of people who live in your country.
- knowing and standing for the Pledge of Allegiance and National Anthem.
- supporting and defending your country's policies and positions, whether you agree with them or not.
- fighting for the ideals of your country, even if those ideals aren't fully present or fully realized in your country.

TIMOTHY SNYDER SPEAKS: *ON TYRANNY*



Timothy Snyder's **YouTube channel** includes videos on **Chapter 19** (6:28) and **Chapter 20** (6:57), as well as each of the other 18 points in *On Tyranny*. If you have time to do so, you may wish to include these videos in the lesson with the following discussion questions:

- Snyder describes the difference between a nationalist and a patriot. What is the distinction between the two?
- Snyder says that, in the media, we courageous people are often portrayed as larger-than-life figures, but in real life, "courage can take small forms." What is one small way that you have been courageous recently?

*Technology-free classroom? Transcripts for these videos are available via Google Docs (**Chapter 19** / **Chapter 20**).*

3 WHAT IS A GLOBAL CITIZEN? *15 MINUTES*

Students will work in small groups to learn about one real global citizen who is working to make change.

Materials

- **Google Slides deck** (optional)
- Student Handouts
  - » Global Citizen Profiles (**Handout A**)
    - **Malala Yousafzai**
    - **Nice Nailantei Leng'ete**
    - **Xiuhtezcatl Martinez**
    - **Greta Thunberg**
    - **Nupol Kiazolu**
  - » Global Citizen Group Reflection (**Handout B**)

Procedure

1. Begin by making the connection between *patriotism* (love for/devotion to a country) and *global citizenship* (love for/devotion to humanity). Explain that if patriotism is love and devotion to a country, then global citizenship is love and devotion to the world. You might also explain that "global citizen" is also interchangeable with "human rights defender."

2. Ask students: *What is global citizenship?* Engage students in an exploration of the elements of global citizenship:

   Global citizenship involves…
   - Maintaining an open mind about different cultures, worldviews, and perspectives.
   - Exploring and showing solidarity with issues of social justice locally and globally.
   - Understanding that we are all connected; what affects people in one place may have ripple effects elsewhere.
   - Dedicating oneself to making positive changes in the world, however big or small.

3. Explain to students that they will learn more about what it means to be a global citizen by reading and discussing case studies about young people from around the world who are considered to be global citizens.

4. Divide students into five small groups. Distribute one Global Citizen Profile (**Handout A**) and one Global Citizen Group Reflection sheet (**Handout B**) to each group. Note that the groups should focus on one global citizen. Provide enough time for the small groups to read the profiles and engage in a discussion using the discussion questions. Each group should designate a recorder (person to take notes on the question responses and discussion) and a reporter (person to report back to the whole class).

5. Bring the class back together and ask each group's reporter to take 1 minute to share some information about their global citizen, as well as something important or meaningful from their small group discussion. Then, engage students in a whole class discussion by asking some or all of the following questions:
    - Did you notice anything that all of the global citizens (or human rights defenders) have in common? If so, what?
    - What courage was displayed by the global citizens that you learned about? What risks did they take? Why is courage important?
    - How do each of the global citizens reflect the issues facing their communities?
    - How do some or all of the global citizens bring their focus to a global lens and perspective?
    - What is your biggest takeaway from learning about these global citizens?
    - To what extent do these global citizens align with the characteristics of global citizenship we explored earlier? How so?

4 COURAGE AND GLOBAL CITIZENSHIP *10 MINUTES*

Students will consider the meaning of courage and share about courageous acts from their own life with their classmates.

Materials

- **Google Slides deck** (optional)
- Sticky notes

Procedure

1. Begin by sharing that in Timothy Snyder's *On Tyranny*, Snyder reflects that we all have to be as courageous as we can to protect democracy.

2. Make connections between global citizenship and courage by asking students: *What is courage?* Then share the following definition:

    courage: *the quality of being ready and willing to face difficult, challenging, or negative situations involving danger, pain, or risk*

3. Ask students to share with a show of hands: *Do you think courage involves fear?* Then ask one or two students to explain their thinking.

    Explain that showing courage is often thought of as facing such situations without fear. In reality, courage almost always involves fear; we face difficult or challenging situations despite having fear.

4. Invite students to think silently about a time they have shown courage or a time they've witnessed others displaying courage. Clarify for students the different ways someone can be courageous: physical, mental, or social/emotional, and elicit or provide examples of each. Some possible examples include:
    - **Physical (of or relating to the body):** Getting a shot despite extreme fear of injections, climbing a mountain, protecting someone from another person or animal, a firefighter going into a burning building
    - **Mental (of or relating to the mind):** Challenging your own beliefs and ideas, learning something that is very difficult or that scares you, being open to making mistakes, questioning ideas you previously held
    - **Social/emotional (of or relating to interactions with others and feelings):** Challenging bias when you see it, sharing something about yourself that makes you vulnerable, inviting someone who always gets excluded to join something (a game, party, event, etc.).

5. Instruct students to pair up with someone sitting nearby. Have them take turns and share about a time they showed courage. If they can't think of something, they can share about a time someone else showed courage. When both partners have shared, ask them to record their acts of courage on a post-it note (they should not include their names). When completed, invite students to post all of the notes on a wall in the classroom so you have a display of a variety of acts of courage.

6. Read all of the acts of courage aloud and then ask: *What do you notice? What do you wonder?* Engage students in a brief discussion about how to push yourself to be "as courageous as you can." Refer back to the global citizens (from Activity 3) and the courage they displayed.

5 CLOSING: EXIT CARD *5 MINUTES*

Students will consider actions they can take to act courageously for their own country or as a global citizen.

Materials

- **Google Slides deck** (optional)
- Index cards or small slips of paper

Procedure

1. Remind students that all of our courageous actions, big or small, can contribute to protecting democracy.

2. Provide each student with an "exit card" (index card) and ask them to respond to least one of the following questions:
   - Do you consider yourself a global citizen or human rights defender? Why or why not?
   - Each of the global citizens we learned about today decided to take action. What's one area where you would like to take action?
     Examples: climate change, ending homelessness, education reform, etc.
   - What is one way that you would like to be more courageous?

3. You may wish to begin the next class session by reading some of the student responses (anonymously) or by answering questions they shared.

ADDITIONAL MATERIALS

EXTENSION ACTIVITY: DEMOCRATIC VS. AUTHORITARIAN PATRIOTISM

Students will complete a T-chart with characteristics of different types of patriotism.

Materials

- Examples of patriotism from "Opinion Continuum" activity (see p. **198**)
- Digital Document: "**Should Social Studies Be Patriotic?**" (National Council for the Social Studies)

Procedure

1. Preparation: Create a T-chart on the board with *democratic patriotism* on one side and *authoritarian patriotism* on the other.

2. Explain to students that the concept of patriotism can be defined and differentiated by two different kinds of patriotism: *democratic patriotism* and *authoritarian patriotism*.

3. Remind students of the definitions for *democracy* and *authoritarianism* (or elicit ideas before sharing the definitions below, if this is students' first lesson on the topic):
   - **democracy:** a political system in which the power is vested in the people and exercised by them directly or indirectly through a system of representation, usually involving free and fair elections

- **authoritarianism:** a system of power and method of governing which favors total submission to authority at the expense of personal freedom; a system in which there is a concentration of power in a leader or group who is not constitutionally responsible to the people

4. Ask students to think about what examples of patriotism fit into each category, including some examples/statements from the Opinion Continuum activity above. You can also share an example or two from the chart on page 318 of this NCSS article "**Should Social Studies Be Patriotic?**" such as "Belief that one's country is inherently superior to others" (authoritarian) and "Belief that one's country's ideals are worthy of admiration and respect" (democratic).

5. Summarize that authoritarian patriotism asks for unquestioning loyalty and devotion to a leader and the government, whereas democratic patriotism involves a commitment to the values and principles of democracy such as free speech, equality, civil rights, rule of law, and political participation (including voting).

6. Explain to students that in *On Tyranny*, Snyder talks about the difference between *authoritarian patriotism* ("nationalism" in the book) and *democratic patriotism*. He writes, "A patriot, by contrast, wants the nation to live up to its ideals, which means asking us to be our best selves" (114). He also says, "A nationalist encourages us to be our worst, and then tells us that we are the best" (113). Ask a few students to share their thoughts about these two quotes.

EXTENSION ACTIVITY: CREATE A GLOBAL CITIZEN

Students will draw or write about an ideal global citizen.

Materials

- Art supplies
- Drawing paper

Procedure

1. Explain that students will create a drawing or write a description of a global citizen. This drawing or writing about a global citizen can be a real or imagined person. Students can also draw themselves and their aspirations to become a global citizen, if they have those hopes.

2. Provide some guiding questions to help students think through what qualities, beliefs, characteristics, values, personality traits, etc. they think a global citizen should embody. If they are drawing a picture of a person, invite students to think about how they will show or symbolize the qualities elicited below. Questions could include:
    - What, if any, are important or relevant identity markers of the global citizen (age, race, ethnicity, culture, religion, gender or gender identity, community, ability/disability, etc.)?
    - Where did the person grow up? What are some of their childhood experiences (positive and negative) that shape who they are?
    - What issues do they care about and what shaped their passion for these issues?
    - What are some of their personality traits that make them global citizens?
    - What is in their heart? What is in their head/mind?
    - What do they say? What do they hear/listen to?
    - Where and how do they display courage?
    - How do they move beyond their community or country to bring important issues to the global community?
    - What is a quote that shares something meaningful about who they are? This can be a quote that they would say, a quote that someone might say about them, or a quote that they would be inspired and motivated by.

3. If time permits, allow time for students to complete this activity in class. If you run out of time, have students begin their drawing or writing in class, and assign the completion of the activity for homework.

RESOURCES

Woven Teaching

Human Rights Education
woventeaching.org/human-rights-education

Learn more about Human Rights Education, a pedagogy rooted in advancing human rights through teaching that promotes cooperation, respect, and the dignity of all people.

Universal Declaration of Human Rights
woventeaching.org/udhr

From this page, students can access information about the history of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, as well as full text and student versions of the document.

Timothy Snyder

On Tyranny: Twenty Lessons from the Twentieth Century
New York: Tim Duggan Books, 2017

The framework created by Professor Timothy Snyder in *On Tyranny: Twenty Lessons from the Twentieth Century* provides the basis for the *Defending Democracy* curriculum.

Lesson 19: Be A Patriot / Lesson 20: Be As Courageous As You Can
youtu.be/LEYD9W8Atmw (19) / **youtu.be/AB0vux9v5s0** (20)

In 2021, Timothy Snyder created a series of videos about *On Tyranny*, providing an updated perspective on the book's lessons.

Activities

We Are America
Love Has No Labels (via Marketing the Rainbow)
youtu.be/s4lQXC9Lf5Q

This short video (3:37) featuring WWE star John Cena aims to redefine patriotism, celebrating love and acceptance for all communities.

What you need to know about global citizenship education
UNESCO
unesco.org/en/global-citizenship-peace-education/need-know

This website provides information about global citizenship education and why it matters.

HANDOUT GLOBAL CITIZEN PROFILE: MALALA YOUSAFZAI

> "I say I am stronger than fear."
>
> – Malala Yousafzai

Malala Yousafzai was born in 1997 in the Mingora, Swat Valley of Pakistan. She is known around the world as an activist for girls' education.

Malala's father, an outspoken social activist and educator, founded the Khushal Girls High School and College in Mingora, a school which Malala attended. In 2007, the Pakistani Taliban (known as "TTP," Tehrik-e-Taliban Pakistan) invaded the Swat Valley. The TTP started to impose strict Islamic law, including shutting down girls' schools and preventing women from taking any active role in society. Malala and her family fled the region for their safety, but they returned when tensions and violence improved.

In 2008, when Malala was eleven years old, she and her father attended a local press club to protest school closings. She gave her first speech, "How Dare the Taliban Take Away My Basic Right to Education," which was highly publicized throughout Pakistan. Toward the end of that year, the TTP announced that all girls' schools in the Swat Valley would be shut down.

In 2009, Malala continued her activism about girls' education by blogging about her daily life when the BBC (British Broadcasting Corporation) asked her to write about what life was like for a girl under TTP rule. Under a pseudonym, Malala wrote thirty-five entries over the course of three months. The entries were translated into English. Public awareness about Malala continued to grow as she conducted several interviews with national news organizations and starred in two documentary short films, advocating for the importance of girls' education. Later that year, Malala was awarded Pakistan's first National Youth Peace Prize.

In October 2012, she was targeted by the Pakistani Taliban. A TTP gunman boarded her school bus, shooting her in the head and shooting two of her classmates. The attack left Malala in critical condition and she was flown to Queen Elizabeth Hospital in Birmingham, England. She narrowly avoided death, eventually recovered, and then returned to her studies and to activism.

On July 12, 2013, on her 16th birthday, she addressed the United Nations in New York City and gave a statement on the importance of education.[1] This was her first high-level public appearance. After winning the Nobel Prize in 2014, Malala continued to attend school and used her public profile to bring attention to girls' education and human rights issues around the world. In 2020, she graduated from the University of Oxford, one of the top schools in the world. She now lives in England with her husband, Asser Malik, and continues to advocate for women and girls everywhere.

[1] United Nations, "Malala Yousafzai addresses United Nations Youth Assembly," YouTube video, 17:42, 12 July 2013, **https://youtu.be/3rNhZu3ttlU**.

HANDOUT GLOBAL CITIZEN PROFILE: NICE NAILANTEI LENG'ETE

> "I'm driven by passion. Being able to protect these younger girls from these harmful practices is what I want to do; it's an important job. When I see the girls in school, that's my happiness."
>
> – Nice Nailantei Leng'ete

Nice Nailantei Leng'ete was born in 1991 in the village of Kimana in Maasai country, Kenya. She is a human rights activist and advocate for ending female genital mutilation (FGM). According to UNICEF, FGM "refers to all procedures involving partial or total removal of the female external genitalia or other injury to the female genital organs for non-medical reasons. It is most often carried out on young girls between infancy and age 15."[1] More than 230 million girls and women alive today have undergone female genital mutilation in 30 countries in Africa, the Middle East and Asia.[2] FGM is a violation of the human rights of girls and women.

Both of Nice's parents died when she was young. She spent her early years moving among many different homes in her village. When she was eight years old, Nice started to resist FGM. Where Nice is from in Kenya, FGM is considered a "rite of passage" that marks the transition a girl makes from childhood to womanhood. After a girl undergoes the practice, usually at around eight years old, she is then considered eligible for marriage and motherhood.

When Nice's time came to undergo "the cut," she ran away and hid. She did not want to undergo FGM. Nice eventually convinced her grandfather to avoid getting it done by threatening to run away from home. He conceded and allowed her to go to school instead. Even though she had her grandfather's permission to not undergo FGM, Nice was ostracized by her community.

After Nice attended an adolescent and sexual health workshop run by a Kenyan health organization, she wanted to share what she had learned with the rest of her village. Over time, she convinced the male elders that she could hold meetings with her community about what she learned. In the beginning, the meetings were sparsely attended. However, after several years of conversations about FGM and child marriage, Nice persuaded the men in her village that girls and women should be able to stay in school longer, marry later, and forego FGM. Due to Nice's efforts, in 2014, the Maasai elders—who rule more than 1.5 million Maasai people—formally renounced the practice of FGM. She became the first woman to address the village elders at the seat on the foot of Mount Kilimanjaro.

While strongly opposing FGM, Nice recognizes that coming of age rituals are an important part of her culture. Therefore, she decided to imagine and propose alternative "rites of passage" and works with local communities to develop new forms of celebration without FGM. Nice has saved approximately 17,000 girls from undergoing FGM and, for many, childhood marriages. In 2018, Nice was named by Time magazine as one of the 100 "most influential people in the world."

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[1] "What is female genital mutilation?," UNICEF, **https://www.unicef.org/protection/female-genital-mutilation**.
[2] "Female genital mutilation," World Health Organization, **https://www.who.int/news-room/fact-sheets/detail/female-genital-mutilation**.

HANDOUT GLOBAL CITIZEN PROFILE: XIUHTEZCATL MARTINEZ

> "We felt as though we had a responsibility to do something about it. So, we did."
>
> – Xiuhtezcatl Martinez

Xiuhtezcatl (pronounced *shoo-tez-caht*) Martinez, also known as "X," was born in 2000 in the United States. He lived in Mexico as a baby, but has spent most of his life in the United States. Xiuhtezcatl is an American environmental activist and hip hop artist.

Xiuhtezcatl's mother, Tamara Roske, was one of the founders of the Earth Guardian Community Resource Center, an environmental nonprofit organization for youth. His father Siri, taught Xiuhtezcatl from an early age about their Aztec roots, which has shaped Martinez's life and work.

When Xiuhtezcatl was six years old, he stood at a national global warming event and demanded that people open their eyes to what was happening around them in terms of climate change. At nine years old, Xiuhtezcatl started a new youth Earth Guardian group in Boulder, Colorado with the goal of stopping the use of pesticides that were harming the community.

Xiuhtezcatl's public speaking about fossil fuels and climate justice continued throughout his childhood and continues today. As a teenager, he gave several TED Talks and spoke around the world. He has spoken at the United Nations several times and gained attention after delivering a 2015 speech on environmental policy at the United Nations General Assembly in English, Spanish, and Nahuatl. Martinez urged immediate climate action, saying, "What's at stake right now is the existence of my generation."

Xiuhtezcatl has been a part of two lawsuits related to climate justice. In 2013, he and six other young people filed a lawsuit against the Colorado state government, arguing that the government was infringing on young people's rights to a safe climate system. Xiuhtezcatl was the lead plaintiff in the *Martinez v. Colorado Oil and Gas Conservation Commission* case. In January 2019, the Colorado Supreme Court reversed a lower court judgment and, later in the month, they ruled against Xiuhtezcatl and the other plaintiffs in the case.

In 2015, Xiuhtezcatl and 21 other young people, ranging in age from 9 to 20, filed a lawsuit against the US Federal government, *Juliana et al. v United States et al*. They argued that the federal government was denying their constitutional right to life, liberty, and property by ignoring climate change. After years of legal disputes, the case was dismissed in 2024. Despite losing these legal battles, Xiuhtezcatl continues to fight for environmental justice.

Xiuhtezcatl discovered in recent years that he is passionate about connecting with the world as an artist. He plays guitar and also raps, seeing music as a tool to educate other kids about the environment.

HANDOUT GLOBAL CITIZEN PROFILE: GRETA THUNBERG

> "Giving up cannot be an option."
>
> – Greta Thunberg

Greta Thunberg was born in 2003 in Stockholm, Sweden. She is an environmental activist who is working to address the issue of climate change. Greta was eight years old when she first heard about the issue of climate change. Over the next few years, she worked on changing her own habits to make a difference, including becoming vegan and refusing to travel by airplane (livestock and airplanes emit large amounts of gases that contribute to global warming).

When she was fifteen years old, Greta decided she wanted to make a greater impact. She tried to convince Swedish lawmakers to address climate change. For almost three weeks before the Swedish election in September 2018, she missed school and sat outside the country's parliament with a sign that stated "*Skolstrejk för Klimatet*" (School Strike for Climate). After the election, Greta returned to school but continued to skip classes on Fridays to strike, and these days were called "Fridays for Future." This spurred the beginning of hundreds of thousands of students in various countries across the globe participating in their own Fridays for Future. Fridays for Future became a youth-led movement that organizes climate strikes and activists worldwide.

From then on, Thunberg has given impassioned speeches at different forums about climate change, including the World Economic Forum in Davos, Switzerland, and at the European Parliament. She has also spoken in front of the legislatures of Italy, France, the United Kingdom, and the United States.

In September 2019, she traveled on an emissions-free yacht across the Atlantic Ocean to speak at the United Nations climate event in New York City. In her speech, she told older generations they were being complacent in addressing the climate crisis, saying, "You have stolen my dreams and my childhood with your empty words…We are in the beginning of a mass extinction, and all you can talk about is money, and fairy tales of eternal economic growth. How dare you!"[1] That month, millions of protesters marched in climate strikes in more than 163 countries.

Thunberg is credited with raising public awareness and shifting behaviors about climate change across the world, especially among young people. Her influence has become known as "the Greta effect." She remains one of the most prominent voices in climate change today. Greta has been nominated for the Nobel Peace Prize every year between 2019 and 2023. In 2019, she became the youngest-ever *Time* Person of the Year.

[1] United Nations, "Greta Thunberg (Young Climate Activist) at the Climate Action Summit 2019" YouTube video, 4:07, 23 September 2019, **https://youtu.be/u9KxE4Kv9A8**.

HANDOUT GLOBAL CITIZEN PROFILE: NUPOL KIAZLOU

> "It doesn't matter where you come from or who you are; your voice truly does matter and you're more than capable of making change."
>
> – Nupol Kiazolu

Nupol Kiazolu was born in 2000 in New York City, New York in the United States. She is known as an activist who addresses racial justice, civil rights, domestic and sexual violence, and homelessness.

Nupol grew up in Brooklyn, New York with her mom and for part of her childhood, they lived in a homeless shelter. When she was twelve years old and living in Georgia, Nupol was deeply influenced by the killing of Trayvon Martin, a Black teenager in Florida whose tragic murder in 2012 inspired the Black Lives Matter movement.[1] Nupol had an idea for a silent protest at her school. She wore a gray hoodie and taped a message to her back that said, "Do I look suspicious?" The interactions with a teacher and a principal during her act of protest (as well as her subsequent research on the rights of middle school students to protest), inspired her to study activism throughout history. When she was thirteen years old, she decided that she wanted to commit her life to activism.

In 2017, Nupol founded Vote 2000, a campaign focused on getting more young people of color to register to vote. She partnered with the website and organization DoSomething.org with the goal to register 100,000 new voters. That same year, when she was seventeen years old, "Unite the Right," a white supremacist rally, took place in Charlottesville, Virginia. Nupol went to Charlottesville and participated in the counterprotest taking place. There she encountered members of Neo-Nazi groups and the Ku Klux Klan (KKK) and was subjected to tear gas attacks and was assaulted by a KKK member.

Since then, Nupol has organized and participated in hundreds of marches, including demanding justice for George Floyd and Breonna Taylor who were murdered by police in 2020. She was also the president of Black Lives Matter Greater New York Youth Coalition.

After Breonna Taylor's murder, Nupol went to Louisville, Kentucky for a research project called the Violence Intervention Prevention Program. She got arrested for non-violently sitting down on a lawn. She spent 13-15 hours in jail with no food or water. This experience opened her eyes to the realities of the prison industrial complex and how those who are incarcerated are treated. It also opened her eyes to the importance of doing more to fight against this system.

In 2021, Nupol founded We Protect Us, a community service organization "dedicated to empowering Black and Brown people in disenfranchised communities through mutual aid, education, and community safety." Nupol's goal is to run for the US presidency in 2036, saying "I want to see a more equitable and just America where your success isn't determined by your zip code or locality."

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[1] "This Day in History: Florida teen Trayvon Martin is shot and killed," History.com, **https://www.history.com/this-day-in-history/florida-teen-trayvon-martin-is-shot-and-killed**.

HANDOUT GLOBAL CITIZEN GROUP REFLECTION

Global citizen's name: _____

1. What is meaningful, compelling, or important about their story?

2. What makes them a global citizen?

3. How is their love for and devotion to the world expressed?

4. If you could ask them a question, what would you ask?

5. How do they show courage?

6. What does their quote mean to you?

APPENDIX

CONTRIBUTORS

The *Defending Democracy* curriculum would not have been possible without the support of an incredible group of educators. We are grateful for their contributions to the project.

Daniel Bal

Daniel Bal is an instructional designer with experience in educational consulting, curriculum and assessment development, and ELA instruction. He holds a master's in secondary English education and has almost 20 years of combined experience in the classroom and creating content for various educational platforms. Daniel consults on creating a variety of academic materials for educational publishers with the goal of illustrating the value of reading, writing, and research, emphasizing their importance academically, creatively, and professionally.

Acheron Damercy

Acheron Damercy is an informal educator and curriculum creator based in Rochester, New York. They specialize in inclusive and interdisciplinary learning in a museum setting, with content areas including Black history, indigenous studies, LGBTQ+ history, disability justice, and ethics in STEM. Acheron currently serves as the Director of Education at the Rochester Museum and Science Center, and is pursuing a master's in Curriculum and Instruction at SUNY Empire State University.

Christina Dawkins

Christina Dawkins is a human rights activist focused on combating modern-day slavery. She founded A4Abolitionist, a human rights consultancy where she has developed programs for Creative Time, the Alliance for Higher Education in Prison, Yale, and the Congressional Hunger Center. Christina specializes in human trafficking, incarceration, and immigrant detention, using digital storytelling, systems mapping, and participatory research to center BIPOC women's experiences. She holds an MA in Human Rights Studies from Columbia University.

Hana Feit

Hana Feit is a teacher, student, and artist who developed her practice in the New York City public schools she grew up in. In addition to 6-12 grade classroom teaching, she has been a curriculum writer, instructional coach, professional learning leader, and worked to bring disability justice frameworks to public special education.

Mary Finn

Mary Finn is an experienced educator and curriculum designer who has worked in education for over 25 years at the classroom, school, and district levels in both public and independent schools. She has a deep commitment to social studies education that empowers students to understand their world and their responsibilities within it. Most recently, she served as the Vice President of Curriculum Design at Coursemojo, where she led the development of engaging, discussion-based lessons that foster critical thinking and civic responsibility.

Danièle Fogel

Danièle Fogel is a teacher educator, former high school teacher, and education consultant. As a teacher, Danièle taught English as a Foreign Language, Literature, and Reading and Writing in France, Cameroon, and the United States. Danièle has designed and facilitated professional development for teachers, and has taught undergraduate and graduate students studying to become teachers. Danièle has a PhD from the University of California, Berkeley, two MAs from UC Berkeley and NYU, and a BA from Oberlin College.

Esther Hurh

Esther Hurh is a highly seasoned consultant with nearly 30 years of experience in curriculum development, facilitation and training, project management, and strategic planning. Her content areas of expertise include diversity, equity and inclusion (DEI), Asian American history and racial identity, and Holocaust education. Esther embraces collaboration and lifelong learning, and does this work with a commitment to excellence, justice, and inclusiveness. She lives in Chicago, Illinois and is humbled at every tap dance class.

Mariah Rankine-Landers

Mariah Rankine-Landers is a visionary educator, social justice facilitator, and founder of Studio Pathways. With a deep commitment to creative education for social change, she supports communities through transformative workshops and curriculum development. Mariah is a creative strategist, known for her innovative approaches to political education, cultural activism, and social transformation, making a lasting impact on the communities she serves.

Kaviya Sekar

Kaviya Sekar is an education consultant specializing in instructional design. Their work spans projects like climate justice curricula tailored to the Global South, life-skills resources for problem-solving, assessment tools for new teachers, and lesson plans on gender politics. Kaviya focuses on data-driven insights and practical implementation to encourage critical thinking and active participation among both educators and students.

Jinnie Spiegler

Jinnie Spiegler has been ADL Education's Director of Curriculum and Training since 2013 where she creates curriculum, professional development and other resource material on anti-bias and social justice education. Jinnie has worked for over 20 years in K-12 education for New York City and national educational organizations. Her professional interests include civics, anti-bias and social justice education, children's literature, project-based and social-emotional learning. Jinnie has a master's degree in Education from Lesley University and a Bachelor of Arts degree from Hampshire College.

Susie Steinbach

Susie L. Steinbach is a Professor of History at Hamline University who has written extensively on nineteenth-century Britain, with particular emphasis on gender and the law. She is the author of *Understanding the Victorians*, 3rd edition (Routledge, 2023) and *Women in England 1760–1914: A Social History* (2004). She is the daughter of a Holocaust survivor and an admirer of Timothy Snyder's works.

HANDOUT *DEFENDING DEMOCRACY* EVALUATION

One thing I learned:
One question that I still have:
One lesson or idea I will use (and how):
One thing I liked or appreciated (and why):
One thing I didn't like (and why):
One suggestion I have for improving the lessons:

GLOSSARY

- **access to information:** the right to ask for and access public information (e.g., from the government)
- **accountability**: the willingness to accept responsibility for one's actions
- **activism:** action taken for social or political change, usually challenging those in power
- **advocacy:** activities by an individual or group that aim to influence decisions within social, economic, or political institutions
- **algorithm:** a set of rules, data and signals that determine what content is shown to users
- **anticipatory obedience:** thinking about what an authority figure will want, and then doing that thing without being asked to do it
- **arbitrary arrest:** the arrest of an individual without evidence of a crime or without due process
- **authoritarianism:** a system of power and method of governing favoring total submission to authority at the expense of personal freedom; a system in which there is a concentration of power in a leader or group who is not constitutionally responsible to the people
- **civic engagement:** the act of taking action on issues of public concern. Civic engagement can include joining clubs, volunteering, advocating for changes in policy, voting, and more.
- **civil disobedience:** the deliberate breaking of a law or command in order to bring about change, usually in the form of policy change from the government
- **civil society:** groups, organizations, and institutions that contribute to the functioning of society but are not part of the government or business. Civil society includes all non-governmental groups and organizations that individuals create and join, such as religious organizations, nonprofit organizations, charities, etc.
- **concentrated power:** authority and decision-making power held by a single person or group
- **constitution:** a written document outlining a country's basic principles and laws
- **corruption:** dishonest or illegal behavior, especially by people in power (e.g., politicians, police officers, etc.)
- **courage:** the quality of being ready and willing to face difficult, challenging, or negative situations involving danger, pain, or risk
- **critical thinking:** a kind of thinking in which a person questions, analyzes, and interprets information, then uses reason to make a judgment
- **dangerous word:** a word with strong emotional, social, or cultural associations that evokes an intense reaction
- **dehumanization:** the denial of full humanity to a person or group; the process of depriving a person or group of positive human qualities
- **democracy:** political system in which the power is vested in the people and exercised by them directly or indirectly through a system of representation, usually involving free and fair elections
- **disinformation:** information that is deliberately created or shared with the intention to misinform and mislead others, usually to achieve a desired ideological, political, or financial result
- **economic inequality:** the unequal distribution of wealth and opportunity between different groups of society; the gap between the rich and poor
- **efficiency:** being able to spend less time or money to achieve an output
- **exclusion:** the state of being left out; the act of preventing someone from participating in an activity
- **fair judiciary:** a court system in which judges make their decisions based on law, without influence, fear, or other external factors
- **First Amendment:** The First Amendment to the US Constitution contains five freedoms: freedom of religion, freedom of speech, freedom of the press, freedom of assembly, and freedom of petition. Through various rulings, the US Supreme Court has interpreted these First Amendment protections to include freedom of association.
- **fraud:** a deceitful act done for profit or to gain some unfair advantage

- **free and fair elections:** elections in which all voters are able to vote for their candidate of choice, without undue influence or coercion, and in which all votes are counted accurately
- **freedom of association:** the right for individuals to interact and organize with other people on the basis of shared interests (e.g., political parties, social clubs, religious groups, etc.)
- **freedom of expression:** the freedom to express one's opinions; the right to say what you want and to share information
- **global citizen:** a person who feels love for/devotion to humanity; a person who views civic responsibility as extending beyond the borders of their home country
- **hierarchy:** a ranking of positions of authority
- **human rights:** basic rights and freedoms which every human being is entitled to, regardless of their race, religion, birthplace, gender, sexual orientation, or other characteristics
- **human rights defender:** a person who promotes and protects human rights, either on their own or as part of a group, association, or organization
- **inclusion:** the state of being included
- **independent media:** media (TV, newspapers, blogs, etc.) which is free from government influence or corporate interests
- **internet freedom:** an umbrella term which includes the right to access the internet, freedom from internet censorship, and the exercise of human rights online
- **loaded language:** rhetoric used to influence an audience by using words and phrases with strong connotations
- **media literacy:** the ability to critically analyze stories in the media and on social media to determine their accuracy and credibility
- **misinformation:** information that is misleading, erroneous or false. Misinformation is generally shared—and sometimes created—by people who are unaware that it's inaccurate. This is the best term to use when the intent of the creator or sharer is unknown.
- **moral panic:** widespread fears of something that seems to threaten a society's norms and attack its most vulnerable members
- **nationalism:** the belief that your country is better than all others
- **nonprofit organization:** an organization which exists for public, collective, or social benefit (as opposed to an organization which exists to make money for its owners/shareholders)
- **oppression:** unjust treatment or control
- **organizing:** a form of activism that involves working to make change with other people or bringing others with you into movements for social change
- **patriotism:** a feeling of love, devotion, pride, and a sense of attachment to one's country
- **political opposition:** political candidates or parties who are opposed to the ruling government
- **populism:** the idea that society is divided into two groups–the people and the elite–who are at odds with each other. Populist politicians claim to be working for the benefit of the common people.
- **privacy:** the state of being free from being observed or disturbed by other people or by the state
- **religious nationalism:** the belief that the government should follow the beliefs and ideas of a specific religion
- **separation of powers:** the division of a government into branches with separate, independent powers
- **sign:** a direct representation that gives specific information
- **social equality:** equal treatment and opportunity for members of different groups within society (e.g., both majority groups and historically marginalized groups receive the same treatment)
- **surveillance:** close observation; the monitoring of behavior or information
- **symbol:** an abstract image or object that represents a broader idea, emotion, or belief
- **tyranny:** cruel and oppressive government or rule; arbitrary use of power and control
- **repression:** use of force or intimidation by a government to suppress political opposition
- **use of force:** a physical effort used to control or overcome resistance from another person; violence (e.g., beating, shooting, etc.)

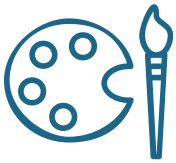
CREATING A COMMUNITY AGREEMENT

A community agreement is a simple way to create an open and respectful space for student discussions. It is useful to take a few minutes and have the students brainstorm and agree upon this set of guidelines. The community agreement should remain posted in the classroom and reviewed as needed. This list can also be an important resource when conversations become heated; you can remind participants that these rules have been agreed upon and need to be respected by everyone.

1. Explain to students that agreeing to a community agreement is important to set the tone of the discussions, particularly when discussing sensitive or personal information.
2. Write *Community Agreement* at the top of a sheet of chart paper or on the board.
3. Ask students to think of rules that they would like to put in place in order for them to feel comfortable to share and participate. You can begin by writing a few examples:
    - Respect confidentiality
    - One person speaks at a time
    - Use "I" statements
4. Record student responses. Whenever possible, try and frame each element in the positive. For instance, "Don't interrupt when someone is speaking" can be changed to "One person speaks at a time."
5. When the class is satisfied with the list, spend a few minutes reviewing it as a group to make sure everyone understands the rules and commits to respecting them.
6. Let participants know that the community agreements list is a living document. Students can propose changes and additions to the document, should the need arise.

GROUP WORK ROLES

Cooperative learning is an instructional strategy in which students work together in small groups. It promotes accountability, community building, and feelings of interdependence. Cooperative learning is an important component of Human Rights Education. The following roles may be helpful for participants when working in groups.



CREATIVE DIRECTOR

- Comes up with theme and style for presentation, where applicable
- Illustrates the assignment with charts, graphs, drawings, etc.

FACILITATOR

- Makes sure everyone in the group is focused, on task, and contributing to the assignment
- Makes sure all parts of the assignment are completed

FACT CHECKER

- Checks assignment for accuracy
- Checks to confirm questions asked by teacher or classmates are answered with accurate information

RECORDER

- Primary writer/wordsmith for worksheets and presentations
- Helps check for grammar and spelling in individual parts of the assignment

REPORTER

- Primary presenter for presentations and report-backs
- Asks teacher for clarification when needed and communicates the answer to the group

RESOURCE MANAGER

- Gathers supplies for group, puts away supplies at end
- Is mindful of time and keeps group on track, assisting other group members as needed

RESOURCES FOR FURTHER LEARNING

Alliance for Youth Action
allianceforyouthaction.org/our-network

Alliance for Youth Action empowers young people's organizations to strengthen democracy in the United States. Students interested in getting involved can find a list of alliance affiliates on the AYA website.

How to Be a Youth Activist: Five Ideas for Getting Started
Boys & Girls Clubs of America (Emme Raus, 5 June 2023)
bgca.org/news-stories/2023/June/how-to-be-a-youth-activist-five-ideas-for-getting-started

This short article offers five practical tips for teens for how to get involved in activism.

Citizen Connect
citizenconnect.us

Citizen Connect is a nonpartisan platform dedicated to healing American political divides. Their website offers curated event listings and educational resources.

Educating for American Democracy
educatingforamericandemocracy.org/educator-resources

Educating for American Democracy strives to ensure that civic learning opportunities are delivered equitably throughout the country. Their curated resources cover a wide range of topics, including civics and historic events and injustices.

The Forge
forgeorganizing.org

The Forge's mission is to "elevate the strategy and practice of organizing through the sharing of ideas, methods, history, and inspiration, and by building connection and community among organizers." Its website offers many resources, including a section featuring youth organizers around the globe.

The Global State of Democracy 2024
International IDEA
idea.int/gsod/2024

International IDEA is an intergovernmental organization that supports sustainable democracy worldwide. Its Global State of Democracy 2024 report found that democracy continues to decline globally, with "one in four countries moving forward, while four in nine are worse off."

Living Room Conversations
livingroomconversations.org/resources

Living Room Conversations connects people across differences through dialogue to build trust and understanding. They offer resources for having conversations about elections, politics, race, and more.

News Literacy Project
newslit.org

News Literacy Project is a nonpartisan educational organizationg working to ensure all students are skilled in news literacy. They offer interactive materials for educators, students, and the public, ensuring that all people have access to news literacy education.

Project Censored
projectcensored.org/in-the-classroom

Project Censored's mission is to promote critical media literacy, independent journalism, and democracy. They offer many resources for educators to bring critical thinking and media literacy skills into the classroom.

Global Issues – Democracy
United Nations
un.org/en/global-issues/democracy

Learn more about the United Nations' activities in support of democracy. The UN "does not advocate for a specific model of government but promotes democratic governance as a set of values that should be followed for greater participation, equality, security and human development."

Youth Activism: Balancing Risk and Reward
United States Institute of Peace (Matthew D. Cebul, 19 January 2023)
web.archive.org/web/20241106185412/https://www.usip.org/publications/2023/01/youth-activism-balancing-risk-and-reward?utm_source=usip.org

Research conducted by the United States Institute of Peace found that youth participation in movements for social change are more likely to succeed than movements with less youth participation. The report also found, however, that youth tend to be marginalized in movement spaces.

Vote America
voteamerica.org

Vote America offers an easy-to-use website for individuals to register to vote, check their registration status, track a provisional ballot, and more.

When We All Vote
whenweallvote.org/voting101/votingrights

When We All Vote works to register new voters across the United States and advance civic education for voters of any age. They also offer information on voting rights, helping to reduce voter suppression in the US.

RESOURCES FROM WOVEN TEACHING

Curricula and Lesson Plans

- **Are We Responsible? Responsibility to Protect in the Age of Atrocity**
  Consider where responsibility lies for preventing or stopping global atrocities and the potential challenges faced by international actors when making decisions about intervention.
- **Free & Equal: Human Rights Around the World**
  Learn about international human rights standards and stories of real people who have had their rights violated or have defended their rights or the rights of others. Explore the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the framework it provides in the struggle for human rights around the world.
- **Human Rights Are for Everyone: A Guide to Teaching for Positive Change**
  Explore the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, a founding UN document which contains 30 articles outlining fundamental rights inherent to every person around the globe.
- **Justice After Genocide: Rebuilding Rwanda**
  Learn about the genocide against the Tutsi in Rwanda and the ongoing process of transitional justice in the small African nation.
- **Liberty or Death: Exploring the Haitian Revolution**
  Explore colonial Saint-Domingue (present-day Haiti) and the revolution that established the world's first Black republic. Students will also learn about Haiti's "double debt"–the massive cost of Haiti's freedom from colonial oppression.
- **Neutralizing the Revolution: The Black Panther Party and the FBI**
  Analyze primary sources from the Black Panther Party, Chairman Fred Hampton, and the Federal Bureau of Investigation's COINTELPRO operation. The lesson includes a discussion guide for the film *Judas and the Black Messiah*.
- **Stages of Genocide: A Toolkit for Educators**
  Explore Dr. Gregory Stanton's Ten Stages of Genocide and examine case studies of historical genocides.
- **Strike!: Workers' Rights & the Matchwomen of London's East End**
  Learn about contemporary workers' rights, a historic struggle by workers in Victorian London, and the importance of solidarity.
- **Uncovering Misinformation: Expression, Propaganda, and Human Rights**
  Understand freedom of expression as a basic human right, misinformation, the role of the media, and propaganda.

Professional Development

Woven Teaching offers professional development workshops for educators free of charge.

If you are interested in bringing a workshop on *Defending Democracy*, Human Rights Education, or any of Woven Teaching's materials to your school or district (virtually or in-person), please contact us at **info@woventeaching.org**.

Work with us!

We believe that diverse perspectives and experiences make for stronger educational materials.

Woven Teaching periodically works with experienced teachers and/or curriculum developers to create original teaching materials, review existing Woven Teaching materials, and facilitate educator workshops. If you are a classroom teacher or other education professional and would like to get involved, please contact us at **info@woventeaching.org**.

UNIVERSAL DECLARATION OF HUMAN RIGHTS
FOR STUDENTS

ARTICLE 1: RIGHT TO EQUALITY, DIGNITY, AND RESPECT

All humans are born free and equal. You have the same rights as anyone else and should be treated with dignity and respect.

ARTICLE 2: FREEDOM FROM DISCRIMINATION

You are entitled to all of the rights in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, regardless of your race, sex, language, religion, political opinion, gender, or other characteristics. Additionally, you have rights everywhere, regardless of where you come from.

ARTICLE 3: RIGHT TO LIFE, FREEDOM, AND SAFETY

You have the right to live freely and safely.

ARTICLE 4: FREEDOM FROM SLAVERY OR SERVITUDE

No one can hold you in slavery or servitude; slavery and the slave trade are prohibited in all their forms.

ARTICLE 5: FREEDOM FROM TORTURE OR CRUEL, DEGRADING, OR INHUMAN TREATMENT

No one can subject you to torture or to cruel, inhuman, or degrading treatment or punishment.

ARTICLE 6: RIGHT TO PERSONHOOD BEFORE THE LAW

You have the right to be legally protected everywhere in the same way as everyone else.

ARTICLE 7: RIGHT TO EQUALITY BEFORE THE LAW

You have the right to be treated fairly under the law. The law cannot discriminate against you because of your race, gender, religion, sexual orientation, or other characteristics. You have the right to protection against violations of your human rights.

ARTICLE 8: RIGHT TO SEEK JUSTICE

You have the right to seek justice and remedy (repair) if your rights are not respected.

ARTICLE 9: FREEDOM FROM ARBITRARY ARREST AND IMPRISONMENT

You have the right to freedom from arbitrary arrest, detention, and exile. You cannot be arrested, incarcerated, or thrown out of your country without a good reason.

ARTICLE 10: RIGHT TO A FAIR AND PUBLIC TRIAL

If you are accused of a crime, you have the right to a fair and public trial. The judges must be unbiased and must not be influenced by others.

ARTICLE 11: RIGHT TO PRESUMPTION OF INNOCENCE

If you are accused of a crime, you have the right to be considered innocent until you are proven guilty. You should always have the right to defend yourself or have a lawyer defend you. No one should be punished for something that was not illegal when they did it.

ARTICLE 12: RIGHT TO PRIVACY

You have the right to privacy. No one can enter your house, open your letters, or bother you or your family without a good reason.

ARTICLE 13: FREEDOM OF MOVEMENT

You have the right to travel within your country and choose where you live. You have the right to leave your country and to return to your country if you want.

ARTICLE 14: RIGHT TO ASYLUM

You have the right to seek asylum (protection) in another country if you are being persecuted in your own country. You may lose this right if you are being prosecuted for a non-political crime (e.g., murder, robbery, etc.).

ARTICLE 15: RIGHT TO NATIONALITY

You have the right to be a citizen of your country. No one can take away your citizenship or prevent you from changing your nationality.

ARTICLE 16: RIGHT TO MARRY AND START A FAMILY

As a consenting adult, you have the right to get married and start a family. Both you and your spouse are entitled to equal rights during the marriage and its dissolution. The family is the fundamental unit of society and is therefore entitled to protection by the State.

ARTICLE 17: RIGHT TO OWN PROPERTY

You have the right to own property alone or with other people. Your property cannot be taken away without a good reason.

ARTICLE 18: FREEDOM OF THOUGHT, RELIGION, AND BELIEF

You have the right to practice your religion freely, to change it, and to practice it either on your own or with other people.

ARTICLE 19: FREEDOM OF OPINION AND EXPRESSION

You have the right to think what you want and to say what you like, and nobody should forbid you from doing so. You also have the right to share both information and your ideas with other people.

ARTICLE 20: FREEDOM OF ASSEMBLY AND ASSOCIATION

You have the right to participate in and organize peaceful protests or meetings. No one can force you to join a group or organization.

ARTICLE 21: RIGHT TO PARTICIPATE IN GOVERNMENT

You have the right to take part in your country's government, either by working as an elected representative or by choosing people to represent you in elections (voting). You also have the right to vote in elections in which your vote is secret and counts the same as anyone else's vote. The primary job of a government is to do what its people want it to do.

ARTICLE 22: RIGHT TO SOCIAL SECURITY

You have the right to social security–to have your basic needs met. You are entitled to the economic, social, and cultural rights needed to live with dignity and freely develop your personality.

ARTICLE 23: RIGHT TO WORK AND JOIN A UNION

You have the right to work, to freely choose your work, and to receive a wage or a salary that allows you to live and support your family. If different types of people do the same work, such as a man and a woman, they should get the same pay. All people who work have the right to join a union to protect their interests.

ARTICLE 24: RIGHT TO REST AND LEISURE

You have the right to rest and relaxation, which includes limiting the number of hours you have to work, and receiving paid holidays once in a while.

ARTICLE 25: RIGHT TO AN ADEQUATE STANDARD OF LIVING

You have the right to an adequate standard of living. This means having whatever you need so that you and your family: do not fall ill, do not go hungry, and have clothes and a place to live. Both a pregnant person and their baby should get special help. All children have the same rights, whether or not their parents are married.

ARTICLE 26: RIGHT TO EDUCATION

You have the right to an education. Education should be free in elementary school and other fundamental stages. It should be mandatory for all children, but parents should be able to choose the kind of education their children receive. Promoting tolerance and understanding, as well as strengthening respect for human rights, should be important goals of every individual's education.

ARTICLE 27: RIGHT TO PARTICIPATE IN CULTURAL, ARTISTIC, AND SCIENTIFIC LIFE

You have the right to participate in and enjoy culture–art, music, books, and more. You also have the right to benefit from any advancements in science and technology and to get credit for and profit from something you have created or discovered.

ARTICLE 28: RIGHT TO A FREE AND FAIR WORLD

You have the right to live in the kind of society and world where your rights are respected.

ARTICLE 29: OUR DUTY TO EACH OTHER

You have a duty to your community and the people around you. When people look out for each other, everyone can become the type of person they want to be. There have to be laws in place in order to make sure everyone's rights are respected. You should not use your rights to cause harm or go against the spirit of the United Nations.

ARTICLE 30: HUMAN RIGHTS BELONG TO YOU

Nothing in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights implies that any State, group, or person can weaken or take away your human rights.