

What are Human Rights?

Worksheet

Human rights are universal, inalienable entitlements - such as the right to life, freedom of expression, and equality before the law - that every person holds by virtue of being human, and that states are obligated to respect, protect, and fulfill.

Questions

1. Which document is considered the foundation of international human rights law?

- A) The Geneva Convention
- B) The Universal Declaration of Human Rights
- C) The UN Charter
- D) The Magna Carta

2. Which of these is a civil and political right?

- A) Right to education
- B) Right to health care
- C) Freedom of speech
- D) Right to housing

3. What does 'inalienable' mean regarding human rights?

- A) They can be sold
- B) They can be revoked by law
- C) They cannot be taken away
- D) They only apply to citizens

4. Who bears the primary duty to uphold human rights?

- A) Private companies only
- B) States and governments
- C) International NGOs only
- D) No one - they are self-enforcing

5. A government blocks a news website that criticizes it. Which human right is violated?

6. A country denies girls access to public schools. Which right is violated?

7. Police detain a protester for 30 days without charge or trial. Which rights are violated?

8. Define: What document is the foundation of modern human rights law?

9. Define: What does 'universal' mean in human rights?

10. Define: What does 'inalienable' mean?

Answer Key

1. B) The Universal Declaration of Human Rights - The UDHR, adopted in 1948, is the foundational human rights document.
2. C) Freedom of speech - Freedom of speech is a civil and political right; the others are economic/social rights.
3. C) They cannot be taken away - Inalienable rights cannot be taken away or forfeited.
4. B) States and governments - States have the primary legal obligation to respect and protect human rights.
5. Identify the right at stake: freedom of expression (UDHR Article 19) Blocking press criticism restricts the free flow of information This is a violation unless a narrow, lawful exception applies (e.g. incitement to violence)
6. Identify the right: right to education (UDHR Article 26) Education must be available equally regardless of gender Denying access based on sex is discriminatory and violates this right
7. Identify the rights: right to liberty and right to a fair trial (UDHR Articles 3 and 10) Detention without charge exceeds lawful limits This violates due process protections
8. The Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR), adopted by the UN in 1948.
9. They apply to every person everywhere, regardless of nationality, race, gender, or belief.
10. Rights cannot be taken away or given up, even by consent or government decree.

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