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**HUMAN
RIGHTS**

SPEAK TRUTH TO POWER

**HUMAN RIGHTS
DEFENDERS WHO
ARE CHANGING
OUR WORLD**

ARCTIC LESSON

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Human Rights Defender Testimony

- [Permanent Participants of the Arctic Council](#)
 - Aleut International Association
 - Arctic Athabaskan Council
 - Gwich'in Council International
 - Inuit Circumpolar Council
 - Russian Association of Indigenous Peoples of the North
 - Saami Council

Universal Declaration of Human Rights

- **Article 2**
 - Everyone is entitled to all the rights and freedoms set forth in this Declaration, without distinction of any kind, such as race, colour, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property, birth or other status. Furthermore, no distinction shall be made on the basis of the political, jurisdictional or international status of the country or territory to which a person belongs, whether it be independent, trust, non-self-governing or under any other limitation of sovereignty.
- **Article 6**
 - Everyone has the right to recognition everywhere as a person before the law
- **Article 25**
 - Everyone has the right to a standard of living adequate for the health and well-being of himself and of his family, including food, clothing, housing and medical care and necessary social services, and the right to security in the event of unemployment, sickness, disability, widowhood, old age or other lack of livelihood in circumstances beyond his control.
- **Article 27**
 - Everyone has the right freely to participate in the cultural life of the community, to enjoy the arts and to share in scientific advancement and its benefits.
- **Article 29**
 - Everyone has duties to the community in which alone the free and full development of his **personality is possible.**

Guiding Questions

- Why is biodiversity important to the Sustainable Development goals?
- How does climate change affect human rights?
- What do you know about the Arctic?
- Why are human rights important in the Arctic?
- Why are Sustainable Development Goals important in the Arctic?

Sustainable Development Goals

- SDG 15: Protect, restore and promote sustainable use of terrestrial ecosystems, sustainably manage forests, combat desertification, and halt and reverse land degradation and halt biodiversity loss
 - Target 5: Take urgent and significant action to reduce the degradation of natural habitats, halt the loss of biodiversity and, by 2020, protect and prevent the extinction of threatened species
 - Target 9: By 2020, integrate ecosystem and biodiversity values into national and local planning, development processes, poverty reduction strategies and accounts

Objectives

- Understand the connect between human rights and the Sustainable Development Goals
- Have the ability to draft agreements
- Comprehend the structure and purpose of the Arctic Council
- Have a strong knowledge of the Indigenous Peoples' groups role in human rights, Sustainable Development Goals, and the Arctic Council

Concepts

- Climate change
- International agreements
- Indigenous rights
- Territory
- Intersectionality

Vocabulary

- Biodiversity
- Ecosystem
- Degradation
- Sustainability
- Indigenous
- Sovereignty
- Standard of living
- Terrestrial

Technology Required

- Laptop
- Projector

Materials

- [Arctic Council Website](#)
- [State of the Arctic Terrestrial Biodiversity video](#)
- [Arctic Council Anniversary Documentary: 25 Years of Peace and Cooperation video](#)
- [Permanent Participants of the Arctic Council webpage](#)

ANTICIPATORY SET

Have students watch the [State of the Arctic Terrestrial Biodiversity](#) video either individually or as a class.

- Split students into small groups and hand out presentation papers.
- Ask students in their groups to discuss and write down their main takeaways from the video.
- Ask students to list any human rights at risk.
- Ask students to connect what they learned from the video to the Sustainable Development Goals.
- Finally, ask students to highlight what they found surprising in the video or what they hadn't considered before.
- Each group presents their discussion.
- Have the class discuss the video and their reflections as a whole.

STUDENT ACTIVITIES

ACTIVITY 1

- Ask the students to watch the following video: [Arctic Council Anniversary Documentary: 25 Years of Peace and Cooperation](#).
 - Discuss the structure of the Arctic Council: the Arctic States, the Permanent Participants, Working Groups, and Observers.
 - Discuss why the Arctic Council is both an organization that works with human rights and Sustainable Development Goals.
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ACTIVITY 3

- Explain to students that this activity will be a mock Arctic Council meeting where the students will be assigned roles and must form coalitions to create agreements.
- Assign each student a role. The roles are: Canada, Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway, Russia, Sweden, The United States, Aleut International Association, Arctic Athabaskan Council, Gwich'in Council International, Inuit Circumpolar Council, Russian Association of Indigenous Peoples of the North, Saami Council, Arctic Monitoring and Assessment Programme, Conservation of Arctic Flora and Fauna, and the Sustainable Development Working Group.
 - If your class size is larger than the number of roles listed, then you could assign 2 students to a few roles or you could add more roles by going to the Arctic Council website and selecting more Working Group roles.

ACTIVITY 2

- Have students individually select one of the [Permanent Participants of the Arctic Council](#).
- Ask students to read the profiles of their selected participants. Next, ask students to review one of their participant's featured projects.
- Ask students to draft a short (1-2 page) statement that they think their permanent participant would read before the council.
 - Ensure that the students emphasize how their participant's human rights are at risk, which Sustainable Development Goal is connected, and how climate change affects all these things.
- Have students read their statement in front of the class as if it was the Arctic Council.

INTERNATIONAL HUMAN RIGHTS FRAMEWORK

- Ask each student to come up with their roles cheat sheet. This should include what their role wants from an agreement, what their role doesn't want in an agreement, and who their role is most likely to agree with.
- Give the students time to discuss with each other their cheat sheets and start to form coalitions. A student doesn't have to join or form a coalition if they are unsure who their role would ally with.
- Have the coalitions or individual students start drafting up an agreement that would help solve many of the climate and human rights issues in the Arctic. Require that the agreement reference the UDHR and the Sustainable Development Goals. Encourage the coalitions and individuals to interact, debate, and lobby. Some roles may be key votes.
- Once all the agreements are drafted. Have each coalition (or lone individual) present their agreement via powerpoint for the class. Once each presentation has concluded, have the council vote on the best agreement.
- Once the vote has concluded and a winning agreement has been announced, tell the students that the mock council has ended.
- Ask the students to write a reflection on their time in the mock council. The students should consider:
 - What did their role want from the agreement?
 - Did the agreement include what your role wanted?
 - Why or why not?
 - Did your role have conflict with any other role?
 - How were the Sustainable Development Goals or the UDHR reflected in the agreement that won?
 - How similarly do you think the real Arctic Council functions?

- The Antarctic Treaty (1959)
 - Article 1: Antarctica shall be used for peaceful purposes only
 - Article 2: Freedom of scientific investigation in Antarctica and cooperation toward that end... shall continue
 - Article 3: Scientific observations and results from Antarctica shall be exchanged and made freely available
- Indigenous and Tribal Peoples Convention (1989)
- Agreement on Enhancing International Arctic Scientific Cooperation (2017)

BECOMING A DEFENDER

Write a letter to your representative asking them to ratify the Indigenous and Tribal Peoples Convention in order to ensure everyone their human rights.

Organize an information session during lunch hour on the importance of the Arctic Council.

Organize another mock council in your community to explore more paths of action.