



***To What extent are Children Denied Human Rights  
by the United States Judicial System?***

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This curriculum unit is recommended for:  
IB Theory of Knowledge, IB Global Politics, Civics and Economics,  
and AP Government and Politics, High School Level, 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> grade

**Keywords:** Human Right, Equality before the law, International Law, Discrimination, Inalienable Rights, Right to Life, Due Process, Ratify, Norm, Moral, Ethical, Fundamental Rights, Justice, Protect, Convention, Dignity, Social Progress, Oppression, Standards of Life, Prohibited, Arbitrary, Penal Offense, Advocacy, Collective Rights, Human Rights System

**Teaching Standards:** See [Appendix I](#) for the teaching standards used in this unit.

**Synopsis:** The unit is designed to show that there are over 200,000 children incarcerated in America each year, which denies a child the right to be a child. All children have innate human rights, but these rights are denied by poverty, illiteracy, conflict, corporate greed, and other forms of bondage that steal a child's innocence and youth. We will focus this unit on a child's need for security and the ability to grow up in a safe environment with access to food, clean water, clothing, safe movement, and shelter. Many children are growing up without families and are being denied basic human rights due to their lack of guidance, mentoring, parenting, and opportunity. The impoverished, voiceless children in America are growing up with inadequacies in education, which has a direct correlation to a high incarceration rate. Many children are growing up in adult prisons, serving extended sentences, often for minor offenses, and spending the majority of their life behind bars. The unit will focus on the purpose of human rights: the protection of children, promoting equity within society, the psychological effects of incarceration on children, providing rehabilitation programs, and creating opportunities for juvenile offenders to become meaningful members of society. Students will be responsible for researching, discussing, and developing ideas and concepts that could be used to help reduce the incarceration rate for adolescents in the United States. The major theme of this Unit is the denial of human rights to adolescents who are incarcerated in adult prisons.

*I plan to teach this unit to eleventh and twelfth grade students. I plan to teach this 5-10 unit in the Spring of 2019 Semester of my Theory of Knowledge Class.*

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## Introduction

### Overview

The seminar allowed Fellows to develop strategies to build community within the classroom. We had the professional opportunity to sit down and discuss how to set classroom expectations for the intense discussions that will occur in a high school setting. The seminar group focused their attention on two types of discussions within the classroom: dialogue, debate, and creating a safe environment for all students within the classroom. One of the main goals was the use of language. Many of our students come from culturally diverse backgrounds. They use and hear words from their environment that are not socially acceptable within the classroom or within a socially diverse setting. We, as a group, reviewed words and phrases, that could cause students not to participate or that could cause disruptions within the learning environment. We discussed the links between identity and language. The idea that our words can mean so many different things and these words differ among different groups of adults and adolescents. The words we say, and what student hears, are different. They hear a word and then they imagine or decipher using their imagination what that word means. There are so many words that mean different things to different groups of people. Our discussions centered on subjects that helped our seminar develop and direct our discussions toward effective strategies in developing our units of study, Teaching Human Rights. We, as a cohort, worked on the idea of identity politics and working to secure political freedom the marginalized, not only in America, but throughout the world. Another focus of the seminar was the *Matrix of Oppression*. The matrix demonstrated the type of oppression, which is perpetrated by the privileged class, and the target of the oppression, which is the target group. The entire seminar and the discussions were to show that human rights are not optional. We used personal teaching experiences and personal observations within our discussion groups.

My unit is designed around the idea that all human beings are born free and equal with dignity and freedom. We, as human beings, are born with inalienable rights and we have freedom to reason and understand what is morally right and wrong and should act toward each other with respect. Every person has self-worth and we should treat everyone as human beings. I chose the criminal justice system as my topic because of the great inequity that exists between black youth incarceration and white youth incarceration. It is my belief that the criminal justice system is plagued with injustices, and that America treatment of juvenile offenders as adults is causing a national crisis, especially for the impoverished and uneducated. The racial disparities and harsh punishments for non-violent offenses, and the criminalization of immigrants as a political policy, is a human rights violation that plagues the United States. This plague is exacerbated by treating adolescents as adults within the criminal justice system.

### Demographics

I teach in the International Baccalaureate (IB) program at East Mecklenburg High School. The East Mecklenburg IB Program has 1,050 students in grades 9-12. East Mecklenburg has over 2,000 students with a majority of students in the 9<sup>th</sup> grade. Our school has a population of 52% African-American, 26% White, 16% Hispanic, and 4% other. My classroom consists of eleventh grade International Baccalaureate (IB) Theory of Knowledge (ToK) class of 22 students. The

ages range from 16 – 17 years old. There are five ethnic groups represented in the ToK class: Asian, Caucasian, African, Hispanic, and African-American. The diverse group of students features 15 bilingual students, but all are fluent in English. My instructional strategies have been influenced by categorical data of students I have been assigned. The class has been grouped by ability level. My class is considered challenging because it is part of the IB program and most of my students have demonstrated themselves as “advanced” and some “gifted” per the district guidelines. The 7 “gifted” children do not have 504 Accommodations at my school. Students in the IB program are scheduled A-Day and B-Day classes, so I see my students every other day for ninety minutes a day.

## Rationale

I teach a unique subject, IB Theory of Knowledge, which affords me the opportunity to have discussions, debates, and open dialogues in which my students have an opportunity to share openly and in a safe and secure environment. The rationale behind teaching human rights for children is to educate teenagers on societal problems such as intolerance, prejudice, or racial discrimination. This is an extremely important subject because many of my students have faced or will face racial prejudice in their lives. Many of my minority students fear governmental policies that deny them basic rights. By teaching human rights for children it allows students to investigate societal problems such as intolerance, prejudice, or racial discrimination. The judicial system in the United States has shown intolerance toward African-American males. Biases that have existed toward the African-American community are rooted in the history of America from the Declaration of Independence to the ratification of the Constitution to the Jim Crow Laws that dominated the south after the United States Civil War.

Studying human rights allows students to wrestle with philosophical questions about moral and political issues that are confronted by the denial and lack of implementation of human rights. The students will learn about contemporary issues that plague our society and limit opportunities for minorities and the impoverished. For this unit, I selected an ongoing human rights issue within contemporary American society, juvenile justice. There are many facets to this issue that students might investigate, including racial discrimination, age appropriateness of punishments, and the lack of rehabilitation efforts within the justice system. This unit is timely considering the recent and ongoing Black Lives Matter movement and the push for more recognition of children’s rights.

The 2016 Presidential election of Donald Trump has led to a combative political climate. The President has ended certain immigration programs, such as Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA), and has initiated a process of imprisoning children during the deportation process. The United States government’s decision to separate parents from their children and place the children in cages is not only unethical, but it is also inhumane. The use of ongoing issues, such as removal and imprisonment of immigrant children, is a human rights issue that allows for not only historical reflection into the discriminatory practices of Angel Island from 1910-1945 to the forced imprisonment of Japanese-American children during Japanese Internment during World War II. The idea of Theory of Knowledge is to look into the issues that have plagued America and the rest world. The purpose is to investigate, research, and explore knowledge, and to understand and expand what we know, and challenge what we think we know.

## Content Research of Human Rights

### Overview of Historical Documents

*The Bill of Rights*, the first ten amendments to the United States Constitution, was an essential and vital component to the Constitution. The Bill of Rights protected individual freedoms were guaranteed and these guarantees provided protections against abuses by our government. These first ten amendments limited the government's ability to enact legislation that would deny individual freedoms and provided documented proof that our rights should not be abridged by a government. Without the Bill of Rights, Congress could enact laws that would limit free speech or freedom of the press. These limits could extend to the rights of the accused, fair trial, or the rights to property. The Bill of Rights was necessary for the United States Constitution because it provided an outline for the rights of the people. The Constitution itself provided a structure for our democracy and a set of principles to guide our democracy and protect the people. The idea of Federalism provided a shared power dynamic that entrusted certain powers to the Federal government and certain powers to the State governments. The Constitution was designed to protect every person equally and limit the power of the government.

The universal principles of fairness and equality that defines our Constitution can also be seen the [United Nations Declaration of the Human Rights](#) (UNDHR). The UNDHR recognizes that human dignity and equality is the foundation for freedom and justice and peace. The foundation of the UNDHR is to provide protection against oppression and horrific acts perpetrated by domestic or foreign governments. Human beings must be protected from atrocities and barbarous acts of violence. But even with protections from oppressive, abusive, and unjust behavior by the United States Constitution and the United Nations Declaration of Human Rights, our nation is faced with criminal justice system that maneuvers around the Thirteenth Amendment to the Constitution and allows prisoners to be used as a slave labor force. The Thirteenth Amendment, ratified in 1865, made slavery and involuntary servitude unconstitutional in the United States "except as punishment for crime." Legalized involuntary servitude of prisoners is a major problem in America today. Over fifty United States based companies employ a variety of prison laborers to help produce goods and services for their companies. This new version of indentured servitude pays inmates on average .90 cents an hour to produce a variety of goods and services. (Newsweek)

### *Juvenile Justice and United States*

The juvenile justice system maintains rehabilitation as its main goal. Yet, our system does not take into account the root causes of juvenile incarceration. The John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation and the Robert F. Kennedy National Resource Center for Juveniles have invested time and resources into looking at the problems of mental health, poverty, and educational deficiencies that exist and in turn perpetuate the complications that exist in the juvenile justice system. According to the *Sentencing Project*, the youth incarceration rate nationally is 152 per 100,000 for all youth in the United States. The black incarceration rate is 433 per 100,000 nationally, while the white youth incarceration rate is 86 per 100,000. The statistics overall show an increase of 22% since 2001 and thirty-one states have shown an

increase in black incarceration for youth offenders of over 37% (Sentencing Project). The Statistics also show that 85% of all juveniles within the juvenile court system are illiterate.

These statistics are further amplified by the correlation between reading levels and incarceration rate in the United States. The inequity within our educational system is magnified by the literacy rate and the incarceration rate and poverty rate. The major theme of this Unit is the denial of human rights to adolescents who are incarcerated in adult prisons. The crimes committed by juvenile offenders range from violent offenses, such as murder, rape, assault with a deadly weapon, and armed robbery to non-violent offenses, such as petty theft, drug possession, and drug distribution.

The focus of my curriculum unit is juvenile justice, but we will also explore the more complex system of institutionalized racism in the juvenile justice system. I am using Article 25 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights states that “Childhood is entitled to special care and assistance. All children, whether born in or out of wedlock, shall enjoy the same protection.” In 1990, the United Nations drafted and adopted a Convention of Human Rights of the Child. Many children suffer from abandonment, poverty, conflict, violence, and many are forced into Child Protective Services. Article 25 of the UNDHR will be focus for my students, because it outlines the evidence I want my student to focus on when deciding on what can be done to reimagine how to deal with adolescents in the adult justice system. The judicial system in the United States has shown discrimination toward African-American males. Biases that have existed toward the African-American community are rooted in the history of America from the Declaration of Independence to the ratification of the Constitution to the Jim Crow Laws that dominated the South.

A major reason for the rise of incarceration rates, especially for non-violent offenses, is the war on drugs. The war on drugs was implemented by President Richard Nixon in 1973. President Nixon increased the size of the Federal Drug Enforcement Agency and made marijuana a Schedule One Drug, which means that marijuana was classified as a one of the most illegal drugs, on the same level as heroin and cocaine. Although this is the beginning of the war on drugs, it is only the foundation. The election of President Ronald Reagan began the development and implementation of the war on drugs that has led to the mass incarceration of minorities for non-violent drug offenses over the decades and from President to President. In fact, during every President’s continuation of the war on drugs, studies and recommendations by prison reform committees have asserted that marijuana should be decriminalized. In a *Rolling Stone* article, President Clinton stated that, “we really need a reexamination of our entire policy on imprisonment” of people who use drugs, and said that marijuana should use, “should be decriminalized” (Drugpolicy.org). The war on drugs as led to mass incarceration and the rise prison industrial complex.

The *Prison Industrial Complex* is a political, economic, and societal solution to the problem of crime in America. State and Federal prisons have begun to turn over control of their prison systems to private companies. Two of the most notorious prison companies are the Corrections Corporation of America (CoreCivic) and GEO Group. CoreCivic and GEO Group run over 170 prisons world-wide and over 120 in the United States. These corporate prisons house over 150,000 prisoners and generate revenues close to 4 billion dollars

(Investigate.afsc.org). GEO Group has also benefited from President Donald Trump's "Zero-Tolerance" immigration policy, which has increased the incarceration or detention rates of immigrants. GEO Group has partnered with Immigration and Customs Enforcement to house and run detention centers in the United States. GEO operates many of the facilities that the Trump Administration ordered to separate detained immigrant children from their parents.

*Punishment and Inequality in America* by Bruce Western shows that 60% of African-American male dropouts will end up in prison by the age of 34. Of the 60% of males within prison are functionally illiterate, meaning these inmates can read or write well enough to function in society. The inequity within our educational system is magnified by the literacy rate and the incarceration rate and poverty rate. When someone has more education, they are less likely to commit a crime and are more likely to earn a livable wage. The Federal government continues to ignore the problem and state governments do not address the problem of unequal educational opportunities for the poor. State and local government funding is on average \$1,000 less per student in Title I (low income) schools. Educational inequality is a direct result of school readiness. School readiness reflects a child's ability to succeed both academically and socially in a school environment. It requires physical well-being and appropriate motor development, emotional health and a positive approach to new experiences, age-appropriate social knowledge and competence, age-appropriate language skills, and age-appropriate general knowledge and cognitive skills (NIH.gov). It is well-documented that poverty decreases a child's readiness for school through aspects of health, home life, schooling and neighborhoods.

Six poverty-related factors are known to impact child development in general and school readiness in particular. They are the incidence of poverty, the depth of poverty, the duration of poverty, the timing of poverty (eg, age of child), community characteristics (eg, concentration of poverty and crime in neighborhood, and school characteristics) and the impact poverty has on the child's social network (parents, relatives and neighbors). A child's home has a particularly strong impact on school readiness. Children from low-income families often do not receive the stimulation and do not learn the social skills required to prepare them for school. Typical problems are parental inconsistency (with regard to daily routines and parenting), frequent changes of primary caregivers, lack of supervision and poor role modelling. Very often, the parents of these children also lack support. Studies have repeatedly shown that socioeconomic factors have a large, pervasive and persistent influence over school achievement (NIH.gov). The Phipps Conservatory examined income and child outcomes in children four to 15 years of age based on data from the National Longitudinal Survey of Children and Youth (NLSCY). In this study, higher incomes were consistently associated with better outcomes for children. The largest effects were for cognitive and school measures (teacher-administered math and reading scores), followed by behavioral and health measures, and then social and emotional measures, which had the smallest associations.

The findings demonstrated that socioeconomic disadvantage and other risk factors that are associated with poverty, such parental educational levels and family stress levels have negative effects on behavior and cognitive development. E. Britt Patterson's *Criminology*, demonstrated that living in extreme and persistent poverty has a negative correlation on cognitive development and academic achievement. A child living in a low SES neighborhood and attending a low performing school is at a high risk for school failure, incarceration, drug abuse, abuse by a parent or guardian, and dropping out of school. (*Criminology*)

These statistics are further amplified by the fact that people living in households in the US that have an income level below the Federal poverty threshold have more than double the rates of violent victimization compared to individuals in high-income households. Juveniles living in poverty are more likely to be pressured to survive in areas that lack opportunities and resources to escape their low socioeconomic situations. A higher percentage of minorities are living in poverty and find it difficult to find employment, medical services, mental health services, or quality educational opportunities. Without the resources necessary to increase opportunity, most juveniles in high poverty areas are forced to choose between minimum wage jobs or crime. Statistics show that on average African-American males working full-time earn 72% less than their white counterparts. African-American women working a full-time job earn up to 85% less than their white women. (Rogers) Inequality in the workforce for minority adults affect the minority youth, who are either forced to work to help the family, or whom often turn to crime as a means of helping to support the family. This amplified by the delinquency rates of African-Americans. There are around 856,000 juvenile arrest per year for burglary, robbery, and drug offenses and of those 856,000 arrests, 81% are minorities.

My argument and rationale for developing this unit is that our society is continuing to marginalize the problems that exist within the minority communities. Educational deficiencies and inadequacies continue to plague the lower socioeconomic population in America. Minority communities are ravaged by poverty and unequal access to opportunities. The lack of opportunity to minority communities affect minority youth, as well. The inequities have caused an imbalance in the justice system, especially for juveniles. *The Convention on the Rights of the Child* is concerned with the welfare of children. This unit specifically deals with the children who are incarcerated within the adult prison system, but also explores the racial inequity within juvenile justice system in the United States.

Teachers who teach this unit should use the National Conference of State Legislatures to understand juvenile justice sentencing and procedures for juvenile justice. One major fact is that all juvenile cases must begin in juvenile courts but can be transferred from juvenile courts to adult courts. Some cases, such as murder or seriously violent crimes will be excluded from juvenile courts and will be adjudicated in adult court. One of the problems with trying a juvenile as an adult, is the “Once an adult, always an adult” transfer rule that states follow. If a juvenile is tried in adult court, that juvenile will be tried in adult court in almost all circumstances, no matter how minor the offense. (NCSL). Another interesting resource for teachers is the Vanderbilt University project on effective rehabilitation. Vanderbilt University’s Peabody College has compiled rehabilitation studies for youth offenders. These programs initiate restorative programs for substance abuse, juvenile delinquency programs, and ways to improve the juvenile justice system. The Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention have created rehabilitative programs to assist juveniles with mental illness and behavioral problems, education initiatives, arts programs, and trade school opportunities. (OJJDP.gov) The Justice Center for Juvenile Justice Reform (CJJR), established by Georgetown University, is another resource teachers can use to demonstrate rehabilitative programs to help juvenile offenders. The CJJR established the Capstone Project of Juvenile Justice, which works to develop best practices for serving high risk youth who are in custody in an effort to promote leadership, facility-based education, family assessment, and reentry planning and training for families and the incarcerated youth. (CJJR)

## Unit Goals and Student Learning Outcomes

### *Unit Goals*

It is essential that young people understand that they have a voice in society and it is one of their responsibilities to use that voice in protest or to speak up for the voiceless in our society. Students should begin to get involved and educate themselves about issues. This unit allows student's opportunities to research, dialogue, educate, participate, and voice their opinions about the juvenile justice system in America. Students will be provided with the tools to research, question, dialogue, and debate issues related to the denial of human rights to minority adolescents in the criminal justice system. Students will explore the economic, political, and social constraints that have caused a rise in minorities being incarcerated at higher level than whites. The students will focus their research and discussions on juvenile criminal justice and the lack of restorative justice and rehabilitative programs to reduce recidivism in the juvenile justice system. The idea is for the students to explore the issues through the eyes of a Human Rights Advocate. I want my unit to ignite a desire for my students to take action, and to develop ideas to create transformative measures to deal with the issue of inequity within the juvenile justice system. But for my students to do this, they must first understand, through research the problems that lead to youth incarceration. The entire unit is driven by the idea of that there is inequity within our justice system and they need to explore, like an activist to assist the voiceless in our society.

### *Student Learning Outcomes*

Students will be required to meet Common Core, IB, or AP Standards linked through Appendix I on the first page. Students must understand how discrimination has been interwoven into the fabric of the American Justice System since this country was founded. They will also need to learn about key documents and events that led to shaping the justice system. Students will also learn about activists and ongoing models for improving the juvenile justice system in America and be able to compare different models and interventions then argue for which ones they see as necessary to ensuring human rights for all youth. Through this unit, my students will educate themselves on adolescents, who are the same age, that live in adult prisons, and the social and economic factors that have caused this to happen within the American society. My students will analyze educational, economic, and societal statistics that have a significant impact on the minority, adolescent population within the United States. My students will understand the importance and significance of these events on the development a democratic nation.

By the end of this unit, students should be to define juvenile justice in his or her own voice. Students should be able to explain key historical events and documents that have shaped the current juvenile justice system. Students should be able to analyze complex relationships between history and politics. Students should be able to understand how history and politics have influenced the juvenile justice system. Students should be able to compare models and interventions for improving juvenile justice in America through a human rights lens. Students should be able to argue in writing and orally for how the juvenile justice system needs changed to better support human rights.

## **Instructional Implementation**

This unit is designed to take 5 – 7 days to complete. The unit is designed for an International Baccalaureate (IB) Theory of Knowledge class, but can be adopted for a Civics and Economics and AP Government and Politics class. I plan to teach this course to my IB Theory of Knowledge class and my IB Philosophy class.

The IB unit planning model requires the incorporation of one key concept, three or fewer related concepts, and one global context into a Statement of Inquiry, which the students will use as during all aspects of the unit. Key concepts are terms that are explored in their English and Social Studies classes, and are relevant beyond the classroom. Related concepts are terms that are more specific to each subject, but still reach beyond the classroom. Global context terms are concepts that connect students in my class to their peers across the world. My IB-structured unit will have summative assessment tasks that are used to generate knowledge and will measure the level of my students' understanding of unit's objectives, inquiry questions, and statement of inquiry. There will be three separate Formative Assessments that will be used to generate data that will analyze their knowledge gained throughout this lesson. By synthesizing the information in a variety of ways, students will be able to use the knowledge in creative activities, while also predicting outcomes and using problem solving skills to find solutions to the problems being researched.

Considering the focus of my unit, the key concept that I have chosen to incorporate is justice. The related concept I will be using is equality. Lastly, my global context will focus rights and responsibilities of governments and people to protect and fight for equity and equality for all people through the lens of human rights. The key focus of this unit are the rights of the child, so the global focus is dedicated to the global inadequacy of rights for children around the world. Thus, my unit will revolve around the following Statement of Inquiry: Our inequity within the justice system has created a lack of equality within our society and the responsibility to help all people of the world have equal human rights, especially children. Further, the IB model suggests that during my unit students explore factual, conceptual, and debatable questions in order to give shape to their understanding of the unit objectives. These are listed below:

### **Factual Questions:**

- Why and where are juveniles tried as adults?
- How are minorities treated differently within the juvenile justice system?
- What are factors exist that create the inequity within the juvenile justice system?

### **Conceptual Questions:**

- What is my role as an activist?
- Why have minorities not been able to break the chains of poverty?

### **Debatable Questions:**

- Is our justice system biased against minorities?
- Is poverty an institutionalized part of American society? Is institutionalized poverty the main cause of high incarceration rate of minority populations in the United States?

## Teaching Strategies

The IB Program model separates unit tasks into learning activities, formative assessment tasks, and a summative assessment. Learning activities are the day to day assignments that prepare students for mastery of the concepts, and their assessment tasks. Formative assessment tasks have several goals, the main of which are to understand where students are in their comprehension of unit materials, and to prepare students for their summative assessment. These tasks are developed by first determining the Approaches to Learning (ATL) Skills that are necessary for the unit. ATL Skills break down how specific learning activities are linked to broader, transferable skills, called the ATL Skill Clusters. The five IB ATL Skill Clusters are Communication, Social, Self-Management, Research, and Thinking.

The two primary ATL Skills that I would like my students to demonstrate during this curriculum unit is Research and Thinking. The reason I have chosen these skills is because of the personal responsibility, self-management, and thinking required to understand, communicate, and develop personal, factual opinions about juvenile justice in America. I believe that student can develop an activist approach but also an empathy to break down biases that exist, which will lead to help their social activism. I also want my students to think beyond themselves and work through a creative approach of generating ideas for restorative justice and planning and designing alternatives to prison for non-violent offenders. Thinking and Research allows students to develop and construct reforms to the more bars, more prisoners, and more guards approach to criminal justice. Therefore, my learning activities, formative assessments, and summative assessment will be rooted in students becoming more socially aware, responsible, and socially active.

## Classroom Lessons/Activities

These activities will help students become more familiar with social injustice, human rights, topical research, and developing factual opinions to increase their ability to dialogue within a classroom setting. Students will also learn different strategies to petition the government and how to become activists. Technology (we have Chromebooks) is necessary for to work on and complete the lessons that I have developed. You will also need poster board or large sheets of paper with colored markers, colored pencils, Sharpies, glue sticks, and scissors for some of the activities.

- **Human Rights Academic Discussion Groups:** This activity will take 90 – 120 minutes. The day before the class activity, give the students a copy of the [Declaration of the Human Rights](#) and the [Declaration of the Humans Rights of the Child](#). Class homework: Students will create a list of the five most important Human Rights and 5 most important Human Rights for the Child. Begin the activity with a PowerPoint: [Overview of Human Rights](#). Have students take notes (You can adjust the PPT to meet your needs) on Human Rights to get an understanding. The notes will get students thinking about human rights. Divide students into groups of 3 or 4. Students will begin with a list of the [Declaration of the Human Rights](#) and the [Declaration of the Humans Rights of the Child](#). Each group will begin with a small group academic conversation comparing their lists and deciding on a group

list. Once they have developed a group list, they will write their lists on the whiteboard. Groups will be asked to justify their number one, two, third choice, depending on the other lists on the board.

- Use Human Rights Watch to research areas of the world that are denying Human Rights to LGBT community, Women, and the Disabled. Each person in the group choose a category and find an article. Read and highlight.
  - Individually share your article with group mates.
  - Individually come up with pictorial representation of the struggle (20 pictures -10 per slide) on two slides. First slide is the human rights violation that the group is experiencing and the other would be a pictorial representation of the solution to the problem.
  - Third Slide - 12 font - explain your pictorial representation slides. Any experience you have with human rights violations would be great to read.
  - Each group will present their pictorial representation with each other group, by sharing to me and to the other groups.
- **Human Rights Tree**: This activity will take 90 – 120 minutes. The activity is designed to get students thinking about the roots of Human Rights and the importance of Human Rights. Students will be given a poster board, sharpies, markers, and construction paper. Students will use prior assignment (human rights discussion groups) to create their human rights tree. Students will draw a tree with five branches and four roots. The five branches will represent their most important human rights. Students will create fruit and flowers that will be used for vocabulary and Rights of the Child. The fruit will represent vocabulary terms necessary to ensure these rights are not infringed upon by governments and other people. The flower will represent a Right of the Child to closes matches the Human Right Branch. This requires students to use prior knowledge from Civics, or if in a Civics class, use their Constitutional Vocabulary to assist them. The roots are documents or concepts that help strengthen our human rights or make human rights possible. Once finished, students will complete a gallery walk and comment on the trees using the [rubric](#). Students will answer the following question after they are finished: Identity how the East Mecklenburg Community is being affected by a challenge to our human rights.
  - **Comparing Rights Documents**: This activity asks participants to compare rights proclaimed in the [Universal Declaration of Human Rights \(UDHR\)](#) with those present in the US Bill of Rights and other Constitutional Amendments. This activity challenges students to explore reasons for the presence or absence of certain rights and to reflect on the role of government in guaranteeing rights. My Theory of Knowledge class will have prior knowledge. My Civics class will use this during their study of the Constitution. Teacher Resources will include UDHR and [Preamble and Bill of Rights](#) and [Amendments to the Constitution](#) (11-27). Once students have completed their chart, students will get into groups of 3 or 4 for [academic discussions based on the questions](#) listed in my teacher resources. Students will share responses verbally and use the question document as a note taking tool.

- Students will add Constitutional Right Stars to their Human Rights Trees. These stars will be used to demonstrate the comparisons they made on their charts.
  
- Student-led Socrates Café: Documentaries and questions: This is an out of class assignment for a formal grade. Students are required to participate in a Socrates Café. Students will watch one of two documentaries and answer questions. [Home Box Office Documentary: \*Vice: Raised in the System\*](#) discussion questions. Netflix Documentary: *13th* - Students can view outside of class prior to beginning the statistical research groups. The link is to a discussion guide designed to help with classroom discussions of the documentary. <http://influencefilmclub.com/wp-content/uploads/2017/01/13th-Discussion-Guide.pdf> Socrates Café meets after school or on Saturday. Students record the discussion groups and submit on Class Google Classroom page.
  
- **Statistical Research Groups:** Timeline: This activity will take 90-120 minutes. Introduce [Convention of Rights of Child PowerPoint](#). You may edit the PowerPoint to meet your classroom needs. Students can take notes and compare to UNDHR Notes. Chromebooks necessary to work on and complete the activity. **Summative:** Each group of 3 or 4 will create a Google Slide presentation that they can share with other groups. Students will create 4 graphs comparing Caucasian and African-American juveniles in 4 areas: high school graduation or dropout rate percentage, percentage of Caucasians and African-Americans living in poverty, juvenile incarceration statistics (% of Caucasian and African-American juveniles in detention centers or prison), and unemployment rate for Caucasian and African-Americans. The focus of the research is not on all minority groups. The focus is on the gap that exists between the Caucasian community and African-American community. The statistics gathered will be documented using the latest [MLA citation format](#). These statistics will be gathered from the 7 most populous states in the United States: California, Texas, New York, Florida, Illinois, Pennsylvania, Ohio and North Carolina. The goal is for students to become aware of the gaps that exists in these 4 categories between African-Americans and Caucasians throughout the United States. The information should lead students to see the overwhelming inequity within the United States. Students will be asked link poverty, unemployment, education levels, and incarceration rate of juveniles.
  - Students will research different programs to help decrease the gap between African-American and Caucasians in all 4 categories: poverty, unemployment, graduation/dropout rate, and incarceration rates. After they have researched in groups they will design plans to implement programs that will help in the process of decreasing the gap in each category or programs that can be combined to help with the problems listed above.
  - Students will use the [Declaration of Human Rights of the Child](#) and link a human right with the solutions the students come up with to show a way to create equality for all children.

- Students will go on to *Human Rights Watch: Children Behind Bars* and will do a free write that compares the problems faced by American Juveniles and problems faced by children throughout the world. Prompt: To what extent are children throughout the world being denied human rights? 800-1000 words. Students will use statistics gathered in their research and information from the Human Rights Watch website, which has specific cases of human rights violations against children all over the world. [IB Writing Rubric will be used to score the free write.](#)
- **Academic Posters:** This activity will take 90 – 120 minutes. Students will create an academic poster presentation that explains one of the articles listed on the Teachers Resource page. Students will use previous information from their slideshow presentations to enhance their posters, including the graphs and solutions to the problems, while demonstrating their knowledge of the [Declaration of Human Rights of the Child](#). Students should follow the guidelines:
  - Important information should be readable from about 2 feet away
  - Title is short and draws interest
  - Word count of about 300 to 800 words
  - Text is clear and to the point
  - Use of bullets, numbering, and headings make it easy to read
  - Effective use of graphics, color and fonts
  - Consistent and clean layout
  - Includes acknowledgments, your name, class, and school

The students will use the poster as a tool to visually explain research. The poster is a visual representation that needs to draw interest to the topic. A poster should provide information and generate discussions. The academic posters will be displayed in the Media Center and other Theory of Knowledge, Civics, and IB Global Politics classes will be invited to visit the Media Center and ask questions about the Academic Posters.

- **Interactive Project:** This assignment will be outside of class. Students will have 45 minutes in class to plan their project. Students must submit idea to teacher and begin the planning process. The types of acceptable assignments are listed below:
  - Podcast on Prisons violating human rights of Children (Outline script must be provided)
  - Creating a webpage that deals with Juvenile Prison Reform (Must of 5-6 hyperlinks to information and back to menu. Must have visuals on the main page and information about the project.
  - [Writing a Representative](#) about juvenile justice bills that are either in the House of Representatives or in the Senate. Students must follow criteria from Interactive Link and must provide written copy of email to teacher and cc teacher when completed and sent to Representative.
  - Students may come up with own idea, but must be approved by teacher.

## Appendix 1: IB, AP, Common Core Standards

NC Common Core: C&E: FP.C&G.1.4 Analyze the principles and ideals that promote freedom, rule of law, limited government, individual rights –life, liberty, pursuit of happiness --

Students will explore documents that have provided rights and freedoms for individuals who have been oppressed.

NC Common Core: C&E: FP.C&G.2.3 Evaluate the U.S. Constitution as a “living Constitution” in terms of how the words in the Constitution and Bill of Rights have been interpreted and applied throughout their existence -- Students will use the United Nations Declaration of Human Rights and the Declaration of Human Rights of the Child and compare to the United States Constitution, especially the Bill of Rights and Declaration of Independence.

**Link to:** [IB Learner Profile Standards](#)

**IB: Inquirers:** Students will use their natural curiosity to acquire the skills necessary to conduct inquiry and research into the Human Rights Issue. Students will become independent learners and work within a group to actively search and share information.

**IB: Knowledgeable:** Students will explore concepts, ideas and issues related to Human Rights and show the local and global significance. In so doing, they acquire in-depth knowledge and develop understanding across a broad and balanced range of disciplines.

**IB: Principled:** Students will act with integrity and honesty while discussing and researching Human Rights issues. Students should approach Human Rights with a strong sense of fairness, justice and respect for the dignity of the individual, groups and communities. Students will take responsibility for their own actions and the consequences that accompany them.

**IB: Open-minded:** Students will understand and appreciate their own cultures and personal histories, and are open to the perspectives, values and traditions of other individuals and communities. Students need to be accustomed to seeking and evaluating a range of points of view, and are willing to grow from the experience.

**IB: Caring:** Students will show empathy, compassion and respect towards the needs and feelings of others while studying and discussing Human Rights. Students will make a personal commitment to develop ideas or concepts and to act to make a positive difference to the lives of others and to the environment.

**IB: Reflective:** Students will give thoughtful consideration to their own learning and experience. They will be able to assess and understand their strengths and limitations in order to support their learning and personal development throughout the Human Rights Unit.

Link to AP Standards: [Advanced Placement Government and Politics Standards](#)

## Teacher Resources

"A CAMPAIGN OF THE JUVENILE JUSTICE & DELINQUENCY PREVENTION COALITION." Act 4 Juvenile Justice. August 2014. Accessed November 19, 2018. [https://www.act4jj.org/sites/default/files/ckfinder/files/ACT4JJ Youth In Adult System Fact Sheet Aug 2014 FINAL.pdf](https://www.act4jj.org/sites/default/files/ckfinder/files/ACT4JJ%20Youth%20In%20Adult%20System%20Fact%20Sheet%20Aug%202014%20FINAL.pdf).

Youth in the Adult System Fact Sheet is very helpful with statistics and statistical analysis of juvenile justice and problems with exist within the juvenile courts and juvenile justice system. The fact sheet does a great job of showing the reader the problem, but does not give solutions to the problem.

"Black Disparities in Youth Incarceration." The Sentencing Project. September 12, 2017. <https://www.sentencingproject.org/publications/black-disparities-youth-incarceration/>.

The Sentencing Project is a great website that deals with trying to change the way Americans view crime and punishment. The project works for a fair and effective criminal justice system that addresses racial disparity in the criminal justice system. This website has great articles, statistics, and data about the racial problems with incarceration and alternatives to incarceration.

"Children's Rights." Human Rights Watch. <https://www.hrw.org/topic/childrens-rights>.

Human Rights Watch Website is excellent for research data and articles that deal with human rights problems in the United States and throughout the world. There are articles that deal with human rights violations against children throughout the world.

Childress, Sarah. "Why States Are Changing Course on Juvenile Crime." *Frontline*, December 17, 2014. Accessed November 19, 2018. <https://www.pbs.org/wgbh/frontline/article/why-states-are-changing-course-on-juvenile-crime/>.

Why states are changing course on Juvenile Crime: This article is dealing with Arizona's Proposition 21, which allows juveniles to be tried as adults and imprisoned with adults. This article contains links to new research that shows the effects of juveniles who are transferred to adult prisons and also the recidivism rates for juveniles. This articles has many federal cases that deal with the issue of juvenile justice.

Huffaker, Christopher. "In Many States, Black Juveniles End up in Adult Court in High Numbers." *Miami Herald*, June 22, 2017. Accessed November 19, 2018. <https://www.miamiherald.com/news/nation-world/national/article157648774.html>.

In many states, black juveniles end up in adult court in high numbers because of the lack of opportunity within their surrounding areas. Most of these juveniles end up back in prison. This is an excellent source that gives testimony and first-hand analysis of the problem with juvenile justice.

"Juvenile Life Without Parole." American Civil Liberties Union.

<https://www.aclu.org/issues/juvenile-justice/youth-incarceration/juvenile-life-without-parole>.

State by State Incarceration Rates are listed in on the ACLU website. There are four different articles that deal with the juvenile justice system. One article deals with youth incarceration and the problems and how incarceration affects the jailed juvenile. Another article talks about youth solitary confinement. A third article details juveniles who are in prison without parole. The final article discusses alternatives to incarceration and ways to stop recidivism and work on rehabilitation.

Lahey, Jessica. "The Steep Costs of Keeping Juveniles in Adult Prisons." *The Atlantic*, January 8, 2016. <https://www.theatlantic.com/education/archive/2016/01/the-cost-of-keeping-juveniles-in-adult-prisons/423201/>.

Despite federal statues prohibiting it, many states imprison those under 18 alongside adults, where they are much more likely to suffer sexual abuse and violence. The article talks about harsh cases, as way to get the reader's attention. The article is more about the cost of housing juveniles and the steep price they pay for being in prison. The article has citations within the article that leads the reader to surveys and plans to help youth offenders.

"More Than 1,000 Kids Are in Adult Prisons, Putting Them at Risk of Rape." *Take Part*, December 03, 2015. Accessed November 19, 2018.

<http://www.takepart.com/article/2015/12/03/kids-adult-prisons>.

More Than 1,000 Kids Are in Adult Prisons, Putting Them at Risk of Rape. This is part of the summary of the article. This is a new report to get juveniles out of adult prison. This article is linked with a New York Times article about "Superpredators" and Campaign for Youth Justice. It really does a good job of talking about the major problems juveniles face in adult prison.

Rovner, Josh. "Juvenile Life Without Parole: An Overview." The Sentencing Project. October 22, 2018. Accessed November 19, 2018. <https://www.sentencingproject.org/>.

The Sentencing Project is a great website that deals with trying to change the way Americans view crime and punishment. The project works for a fair and effective criminal justice system that addresses racial disparity in the criminal justice system. This website has great articles, statistics, and data about the racial problems with incarceration and alternatives to incarceration.

Sawyer, Wendy. "Youth Confinement: The Whole Pie." Prison Policy Initiative. February 27, 2018. Accessed November 19, 2018. <https://www.prisonpolicy.org/reports/youth2018.html>.

Prison Policy Initiative Statistics is a report that shows statistics and analysis of statistics about juvenile justice. Links within the report show different types of facilities the house juveniles and the problems with each. The report talks about youth being locked up prior to the trial and the statistics reveal that many who cannot afford bail are forced to be housed in adult facilities while awaiting trial.

"School-to-Prison Pipeline." American Civil Liberties Union.  
<https://www.aclu.org/issues/juvenile-justice/youth-incarceration>.

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Scialabba, Nicole. "Should Juveniles Be Charged as Adults in the Criminal Justice System?" The American Bar Association. October 03, 2016. Accessed November 19, 2018.  
<https://www.americanbar.org/groups/litigation/committees/childrens-rights/articles/2016/should-juveniles-be-charged-as-adults/>.

The American Bar Association website has articles dealing with juvenile justice. "Should Juveniles be charged as Adults in the Criminal Justice System" is one of the articles on the site. The site also has court cases and litigation dealing with juvenile justice. The source also promotes and protects human rights worldwide.

"Youth Solitary Confinement." American Civil Liberties Union.  
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## Student Resources

"A CAMPAIGN OF THE JUVENILE JUSTICE & DELINQUENCY PREVENTION COALITION." Act 4 Juvenile Justice. August 2014. Accessed November 19, 2018. [https://www.act4jj.org/sites/default/files/ckfinder/files/ACT4JJ Youth In Adult System Fact Sheet Aug 2014 FINAL.pdf](https://www.act4jj.org/sites/default/files/ckfinder/files/ACT4JJ%20Youth%20In%20Adult%20System%20Fact%20Sheet%20Aug%202014%20FINAL.pdf).

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## Lesson Activities

### [Human Rights Tree Activity](#)

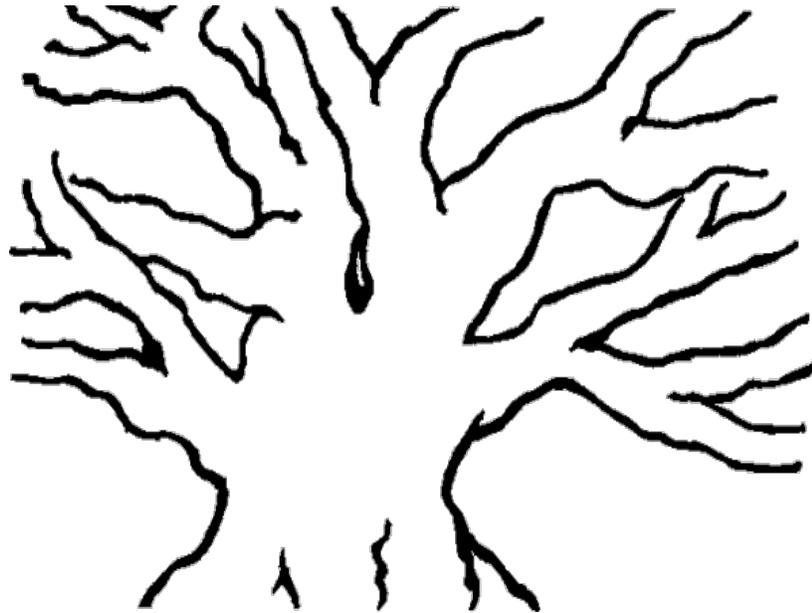
1. Students will work in groups of 3 - 4 Students. On poster board, students will draw a Human Right Tree (Ex. Bottom of page) on the poster board. .
  - Write on the tree branches the 5 human rights your group thought was most important. those human rights that they think all people need to live in dignity and justice.
  - A human rights tree needs roots to grow and flourish. Give the tree roots and label them with the things that make human rights flourish. For example, a healthy economy.
  - Students will cut out flowers and fruit to place on the branches of Human Rights. These flowers and fruits will contain vocabulary terms, ideas, or concepts necessary for the human rights to flourish.
2. 300 - 500 word free write: Identity how the East Mecklenburg Community is being affected by a challenge to our human rights.

Sources for Human Rights Tree

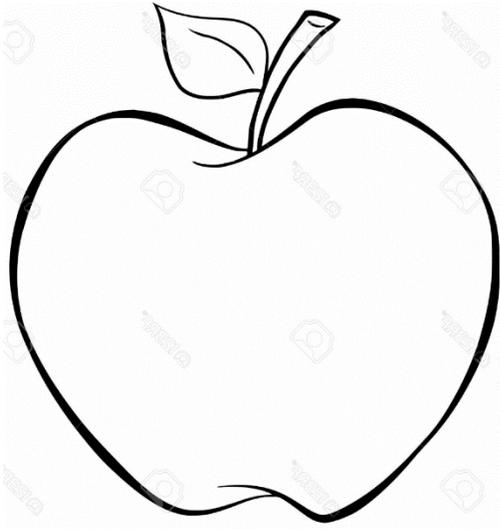
[Universal Declaration of Human Rights](#)

[Declaration of Human Rights of the Child](#)

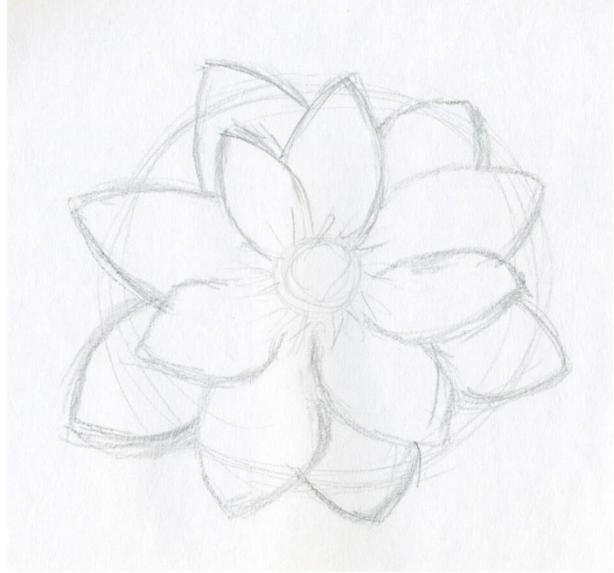
Human Rights Tree



[Gallery Walk Rubric](#)



Click on Fruit for Image



Click on Flower for Image

Comparing Documents Chart

| <p>Handout: Comparing Rights Documents<br/> Directions: For each right listed below, indicate with a check in the appropriate box whether it is included in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (Column #1) and the US Bill of Rights and Amendments (Column #2). Also indicate whether you think this right should be guaranteed by all governments (Column #3).</p> |                                       |  |   |
|---|---------------------------------------|--|---|
| Right   | Included in the <a href="#">UNDHR</a> | <a href="#">Included in the US Bill of Rights and Amendments</a> | Things Governments should be doing for their people |
| 1. Free Choice of Employment  |                                       |  |   |
| 2. Free Press   |                                       |  |   |
| 3. Free Choice of Spouse  |                                       |  |   |
| 4. Adequate Shelter   |                                       |  |   |
| 5. Earn as much as one wants  |                                       |  |   |
| 6. Trial by Jury  |                                       |  |   |
| 7. Free choice of the number of Children  |                                       |  |   |
| 8. Freedom from torture and inhumane treatment  |                                       |  |   |
| 9. Freedom of Religion  |                                       |  |   |
| 10. Right to own property   |                                       |  |   |
| 11. Right to Travel Safely  |                                       |  |   |
| 12. Right to an Education   |                                       |  |   |
| 13. Right to own Arms   |                                       |  |   |
| 14. Adequate food   |                                       |  |   |
| 15. Adequate Health Care  |                                       |  |   |
| 16. Right to Clean Air and Water  |                                       |  |   |

## Discussion Questions for Academic Conversations - Comparing Documents

### 2. Discuss:

- What did you discover that was a surprise to you? Explain:
- Which rights asserted in the UDHR or US Bill of Rights and Amendments do you believe should or should not be universal? Give 2 reasons.
- Do you think the Bill of Rights and Amendments cover more issues than the UDHR? Why or why not?|
- The writers of the Bill of Rights and the writers of the UDHR have different conceptions of what "rights" means? How did their understandings of "rights" differ?
- Do US citizens have any rights besides those included in the Bill of Rights and Amendments, Constitution, and other US law? Explain.
- Should the Bill of Rights and Amendments be more inclusive? Why or why not? What rights, if any, would you add? For example, should Americans be guaranteed the right to food, shelter, education, and health?
- How do you explain why some social, economic, and cultural rights found in the UDHR are not guaranteed by the American documents?
- In your opinion, what should be the limits and responsibilities of government in guaranteeing their citizens certain rights?
- Is hunger or homelessness a government's responsibility? Why or why not?

### Discussion Questions Raised in the System

1. What were your impressions of the youth featured in the film?
2. What was the most surprising thing about the film?
3. What issues does the film raise about the purpose of the juvenile justice system and the balance between punishment and rehabilitation?
4. What role does race play in who enters the juvenile justice system and how the system responds to the needs of youth of color?
5. What messages about adolescent development, mental health, and trauma emerge through this film? What is the impact of incarceration on these issues?
6. What changes should states make to better serve and protect kids in contact with the criminal justice system? Who is in a position to make these changes?
7. Community-based alternatives to youth prisons emerges as an important theme. Are there appropriate community based alternatives available in your community?
8. What did you learn from the film that you did not know before?

## Discussion Questions for Netflix Documentary 13<sup>th</sup>

<http://influencefilmclub.com/wp-content/uploads/2017/01/13th-Discussion-Guide.pdf>

### Writing an Effective Letters

#### **KEEP IT BRIEF**

— Keep letters to one page. Try to discuss only one bill or issue in a letter.

#### **IDENTIFY YOURSELF**

— Begin with an introduction of yourself or the organization on whose behalf you are writing. Use a simple statement, such as "I am a third-grade teacher at \_\_\_\_\_ elementary school" or "On behalf of the members of the \_\_\_\_\_...."

#### **GET TO THE POINT**

— Follow your introduction with a brief statement of your issue or concern, such as "We urge your support for H.R. \_\_\_\_\_, which will \_\_\_\_\_." If you are writing in reference to a specific bill, include the bill number. Follow your opening paragraph with a concise explanation of why you support or oppose the particular bill or issue. A few strong, well-thought-out arguments are much more effective than a laundry list of reasons to support or oppose a bill. Whenever possible, use bullet points to outline your arguments.

#### **RELATE IT TO HOME**

— Help the legislator understand why your position is important to his or her constituents. Include specific facts about how a bill will impact educators, students or schools in the legislator's district. If possible, include a local anecdote illustrating the problem you are seeking to address. Avoid the use of form letters or generic postcards — use your own knowledge and experience to inform the legislator.

#### **ALLOW FOR FOLLOW-UP**

— Include specific contact information and offer to act as a resource should the legislator or staff have questions or need additional information. Where appropriate, state in the letter that you will follow up with a telephone call.

**Address your letter correctly** — See the details on addressing your letter below.

### Using E-mail

E-mail can be an easy and effective tool for communicating with legislators. The tips outlined above for writing letters to legislators also apply to e-mails: keep them brief and to the point, with facts and anecdotes relevant to the legislator's district.

**Avoid informal language** — Email to a legislator should be treated as seriously as a written letter. Resist the temptation to use the informal language and symbols often associated with e-mail communications. Never use impolite language or make "demands."

**Include your full address and zip code** — Make sure the text of your e-mail includes your full name and street address, including zip code. Many legislative offices screen emails for address information identifying the sender as a constituent. E-mails that appear to come from outside the district are unlikely to be read and may be blocked by filtering programs.

## Addressing Written Correspondence

### **UNITED STATES SENATORS**

The Honorable (full name)

United States Senate

Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator (last name)

### **FOR MEMBERS OF THE U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES**

The Honorable (full name)

U.S. House of Representatives

Washington, DC 20515

Dear Representative (last name)

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[https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/wonk/wp/2016/02/26/america-has-locked-up-so-many-black-people-it-has-warped-our-sense-of-reality/?noredirect=on&utm\\_term=.ca4396bcdacb](https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/wonk/wp/2016/02/26/america-has-locked-up-so-many-black-people-it-has-warped-our-sense-of-reality/?noredirect=on&utm_term=.ca4396bcdacb)

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<http://prospect.org/article/understanding-black-white-earnings-gap>

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