

Key vocabulary:

Human Right – A right a person should have
Amnesty International – An organization that fight for people's human rights

UNIVERSAL DECLARATION OF HUMAN RIGHTS SUMMARY VERSION



- 1 We are all born free and equal. We all have our own thoughts and ideas. We should all be treated in the same way.
- 2 These rights belong to everybody, whatever our differences.
- 3 We all have the right to life, and to live in freedom and safety.
- 4 Nobody has any right to make us a slave. We cannot make anyone else our slave.
- 5 Nobody has any right to hurt or torture us or treat us cruelly.
- 6 Everyone has the right to be protected by the law.
- 7 The law is the same for everyone. It must treat us all fairly.
- 8 We can all ask for the law to help us when we are not treated fairly.
- 9 Nobody has the right to put us in prison without a good reason, to keep us there or to send us away from our country.
- 10 If we are put on trial, this should be in public. The people who try us should not let anyone tell them what to do.
- 11 Nobody should be blamed for doing something until it has been proved. When people say we did a bad thing we have the right to show it is not true.
- 12 Nobody should try to harm our good name. Nobody has the right to come into our home, open our letters, or bother us, or our family, without a good reason.
- 13 We all have the right to go where we want to in our own country and to travel abroad as we wish.
- 14 If we are frightened of being badly treated in our own country, we all have the right to run away to another country to be safe.
- 15 We all have the right to belong to a country.
- 16 Every grown up has the right to marry and have a family if they want to. Men and women have the same rights when they are married, and when they are separated.
- 17 Everyone has the right to own things or share them. Nobody should take our things from us without a good reason.
- 18 We all have the right to believe in what we want to believe, to have a religion, or to change it if we wish.
- 19 We all have the right to make up our own minds, to think what we like, to say what we think, and to share our ideas with other people.
- 20 We all have the right to meet our friends and to work together in peace to defend our rights. Nobody can make us join a group if we don't want to.
- 21 We all have the right to take part in the government of our country. Every grown up should be allowed to vote to choose their own leaders.
- 22 We all have the right to a home, enough money to live on and medical help if we are ill. Music, art, craft and sport are for everyone to enjoy.
- 23 Every grown up has the right to a job, to a fair wage for their work, and to join a trade union.
- 24 We all have the right to rest from work and relax.
- 25 We all have the right to enough food, clothing, housing and health care. Mothers and children and people who are old, unemployed or disabled have the right to be cared for.
- 26 We all have the right to education, and to finish primary school, which should be free. We should be able learn a career, or to make use of all our skills.
- 27 We all have the right to our own way of life, and to enjoy the good things that science and learning bring.
- 28 There must be proper order so we can all enjoy rights and freedoms in our own country and all over the world.
- 29 We have a duty to other people, and we should protect their rights and freedoms.
- 30 Nobody can take away these rights and freedoms from us.



Peter Benenson lights the Amnesty candle on Amnesty's 5th birthday

The Amnesty International story

Peter Benenson was an English lawyer. One morning he read a newspaper article about two young people in Portugal who had a meal in a pub. When the pair finished eating they stood up, raised their glasses of wine and drank a toast. They said one word: 'Liberdade!' (meaning 'Freedom!' in Portuguese). They were arrested, charged with subversion (trying to overthrow the government) and were sent to jail for seven years. This made Peter Benenson angry. He decided to start an organisation to work for human rights and to protest if governments took people's rights away. He asked the Editor of The Observer newspaper to give him a page to tell people about his idea. In May 1961 Peter Benenson's Appeal for Amnesty was printed. He wrote about freedom of speech, the right to asylum and unfair trials. He called for an end to torture. He wrote about The Forgotten Prisoners – people thrown into jail just for what they thought and believed in. Amnesty's logo – a candle surrounded by barbed wire – was designed. The candle represents hope and the barbed wire represents prison. Thousands of people wrote in to join the new organisation. Amnesty International was born. Now Amnesty International is the biggest voluntary human rights organisation in the world. It has 2.8 million members in 150 countries. Amnesty campaigns to defend all the rights in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. The movement helps individuals who are in danger, investigates human rights abuses and takes action to stop them. Amnesty opposes executions, violence against women and bad laws. It supports people's fundamental rights to decent housing, education and health care. Amnesty International members ask governments to deal with cases where people's basic human rights are being trampled on. They organise exhibitions and meetings, give out leaflets, run concerts, put up posters, contact their MPs and take part in events and demonstrations.

Absolute, Limited or Qualified Rights?

L
Article 5:
Right to liberty and security

Q
Article 10:
Freedom of expression

L
Article 2:
Right to life

A
Article 6:
Right to a fair trial

Q
Article 11:
Freedom of assembly and association

A
Article 3:
Freedom from torture and inhuman or degrading treatment

Q
Article 8:
Respect for your private and family life, home and correspondence

L
Article 12:
Right to marry and start a family

A
Article 4:
Freedom from slavery and forced labour

Q
Article 9:
Freedom of thought, belief and religion

L
Article 14:
Protection from discrimination