



***THE WORLD AS IT COULD BE (TWAICB)***  
**HUMAN RIGHTS EDUCATION PROGRAM**

**CURRICULUM AND RESOURCE GUIDE**  
**FOR TEACHERS & ORGANIZATION LEADERS**

**Excerpt:**  
**WARM-UP, MOVEMENT AND THEATER**  
**EXERCISES TO ENCOURAGE GROUP BONDING,**  
**STIMULATE CREATIVE ENERGY AND INSPIRE**  
**CREATIVE EXPRESSION OF UDHR THEMES**

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**THE WORLD AS IT COULD BE HUMAN RIGHTS EDUCATION PROGRAM  
CURRICULUM AND RESOURCE GUIDE FOR TEACHERS & ORGANIZATION LEADERS**

Page 8 of 30

**PART III. WARM-UP, MOVEMENT AND THEATER EXERCISES TO ENCOURAGE GROUP BONDING, STIMULATE CREATIVE ENERGY AND INSPIRE CREATIVE EXPRESSION OF UDHR THEMES**

Choose a stretch, along with a vocal warm-up or movement/theater game exercise to start a class, and include a stretch or movement exercise during a lesson to generate additional energy and focus.

**A. Basic Yoga Stretches – Sun Salutation**

- **General Purpose:** Create focus of the body and the breath
  - Once learned, can be led by different students



**B. Vocal Warm Ups**

- **General Purpose:**
  - To help elicit and get in touch with our voices
  - Fun, while also helping with reading aloud and articulation skills
- **Purpose in connection with UDHR Studies:**
  - To help promote “being heard”
  - To “voice” with confidence and steadiness
  - To defend, advocate and promote human rights
- **General Directions for the Vocal Warm Ups:**
  - Start in a circle. Eyes closed. Focus on breathing. Inhale and exhale.
  - Note the Diaphragm: a body partition of muscle and connective tissue, specifically the partition separating the chest and abdominal cavities in mammals. The Diaphragm helps the respiratory/breathing functions
- **Exercises for Projection**
  - **General Purpose:**
    - Control of the volume, clarity, and distinctness of voice to gain greater audibility:
  - **Leaky Tire - Exercise to strengthen the diaphragm:**
    - Inhale and slowly exhale with “ssssss” sound.
    - Explain to students that when speaking, we need as much breathe as possible to carry the sound of the word.
  - **Ha-ha-ha/He-he-he/Ho-ho-ho**
    - Start with a simple Ha-ha-ha at a low volume; Then, increase volume with He-he-he; Then increase again with Ho-ho-ho.
    - Repeat, changing the beginning letters to ‘b’ or ‘c’ or ‘d’
  - **Mountain Echoes**
    - Give the students the image of being on a mountain top and seeing a friend or relative on the next mountaintop. Have them wave to the person and call out “HELLOOOOOOOO!” or “MAMAAAAAAA!”

**THE WORLD AS IT COULD BE HUMAN RIGHTS EDUCATION PROGRAM**  
**CURRICULUM AND RESOURCE GUIDE FOR TEACHERS & ORGANIZATION LEADERS**

Page 9 of 30

- **Exercises for Diction**

- **General Purpose:**

- Enhance pronunciation, as well as clear and proper formation of the play's words
    - Appreciate the power of words
    - Experience the writing of beautiful words
    - Inspire the imagination through the articulation of words

- **Repeating Lines of Poetry**

- Read each line of the following verse from *Ode*, by Arthur William Edgar O'Shaughnessy (1844 - 1881), from his book *Music and Moonlight* (1874) and have the group repeat after you. Focus on annunciating each line with exaggerated intentionality.

We are the music makers and we are the dreamers of dreams.  
Wandering by lone sea breakers and sitting by desolate streams.  
World losers and world forsakers on whom the pale moon gleams.  
Yet we are the movers and shakers of the world forever it seems.

- **Tongue Twisters**

- Speak each of the following lines and have the group repeat after you. Focus on annunciating each line with exaggerated intentionality.

Lips teeth tip of the tongue  
A big brown bug bit a big brown bear  
Whether the weather is cold, whether the weather is hot, we'll be together whatever  
the weather, whether you like it or not  
Unique New York

**C. Movement and Theater Games and Exercises:**

- **General Purpose:** Active exercises used to highlight certain acting techniques (mental, physical and verbal) while encouraging students/actors to work together, stretch their imaginations, gain ensemble skills and integrate UDHR-related theme material.

- **Zip, Zap, Zop**

- **General Purpose:**

- Build teamwork
      - Heighten awareness and encourage quick thinking
      - Encourage use of eye contact, voice and body to direct action
      - Build consciousness and paying attention
      - Humanize connections as people look at others they may not have noticed before

- **Purpose in Connection with UDHR Studies:**

- Raise awareness about “throwing around” one’s human rights
      - Opportunity to debrief about seeing someone different and seeing people differently

- **Directions:**

- Everyone stands in a circle. One person quickly claps and points at another, while saying “zip”. The person who received the “zip” then claps and points at another, while saying “zap”. That person then claps and points to someone while saying “zop”. The pattern continues, “zip, zap, zop, zip, zap, zop...” The goal is to pass the words and energy around as quickly as possible, which is harder than it seems.
      - *Note:* Many theatre companies use this as a warm-up before going on stage, to establish teamwork and to encourage quick thinking. If using this with a group of students, it may take several tries to get into the rhythm of the game.

**THE WORLD AS IT COULD BE HUMAN RIGHTS EDUCATION PROGRAM  
CURRICULUM AND RESOURCE GUIDE FOR TEACHERS & ORGANIZATION LEADERS**

Page 10 of 30

- **Pass the Clap**
  - **General Purpose:**
    - Work together as a group
    - Supports practicing and rehearsing together as a group
    - Reduce/break down individual resistance
  - **Purpose in Connection with UDHR Studies:**
    - Share a moment with a common human rhythm, even among our differences
  - **Directions:**
    - Start in a circle and pick a starting leader who begins the clapping rhythm. This rhythm is passed from person to person around the circle, with each person making eye contact in passing the rhythm to the person next to them.
    - The leader can vary the speed of the rhythm to make sure that everyone is in sync with everyone else.
  
- **Sensory-Emotions**
  - **General Purpose:**
    - Communication of basic human sensations and emotions without words
    - Spans all cultures and languages
    - We all know these sensations and emotions
  - **Purpose in Connection with UDHR Studies:**
    - The concept of “universal”
    - Taps empathy and caring
  - **Directions:**
    - From a “hat”, students pick a word from the list below to demonstrate through their actions.
    - Student picks up an imaginary item to taste or reaches to touch an unseen object. Other students guess what the “sensation” was.
    - List of sensations/emotions:
      - (a) Taste: sweet, sour, spicy, rotten, sticky.
      - (b) Touch: hot, sharp, freezing, soft, sticky.
      - (c) Emotions: Using only your face show: happiness, sadness, worry, fear, anger, surprise, hurt, anxiousness, mischievousness, tiredness
  
- **My Truth (is) Your Truth**
  - **General Purpose:**
    - Generate personal connection with others
    - Empathy
    - Sense of wonder about others
    - Greater awareness of not taking people around you at face value/forming assumptions
    - Beginnings of monologue and character development
      - (a) You write, and someone else reads your words for the stage
  - **Directions:**
    - Hand out lined 3x5 cards.
    - Ask participants to not write their names on the cards. It is important to have this be anonymous.
    - Ask participants to write something personal about themselves, something we would not make an assumption about just from surface knowledge.

**THE WORLD AS IT COULD BE HUMAN RIGHTS EDUCATION PROGRAM**  
**CURRICULUM AND RESOURCE GUIDE FOR TEACHERS & ORGANIZATION LEADERS**

**Page 11 of 30**

- Or, ask participants to write a deep truth they feel but do not have the courage to say out loud.
- Ask that they write clearly and only use the front of the card – be thoughtful, yet concise.
- Collect the cards in a basket, bag, hat or by hand.
- Shuffle the cards and announce that everyone will pick a card randomly.
- Note that if one picks their own card, that’s okay.
- Everyone should read the card a few times to make sure they understand the contents.
- Each participant will then stand and introduce themselves with their real name and read the card as their own truth.
- Explain to the participants that it does not matter if the gender or ethnicity or class or political views expressed on the card is different from their own. It is important that they own the truth of what they are saying.
- **Debrief:**
  - Have students reflect on their experience of owning someone else’s truth, with such questions as:
    - (a) What feelings did you have as you read and then presented someone else’s truth?
    - (b) What part of what you presented reflects your own truth?
    - (c) How has this experience made a difference for you in how you perceive others?
- **Environment**
  - **General Purpose:**
    - Demonstrate how to be clear with non-verbal communication
    - Recognize how assumptions can skew reactions
    - Realize there can be varying interpretations of the same actions
    - Practice being comfortable with pantomime in public
    - Trust-building to speak up, to be oneself and to be courageous
  - **Directions:**
    - One person picks a place, such as a restaurant, and begins silently doing an activity that would happen in the place. Once other people understand where the place is, they add themselves to the picture, doing other activities in the environment
- **What Are You Doing?**
  - **General Purpose:**
    - Demonstrates that “actions speak louder than words”
    - Jolts the brain
    - Jars awareness that the body can do an action, and we can contradict that action with our words
  - **Purpose in Connection with UDHR Studies:**
    - Critical thinking
    - Situations are not always as they seem or as they’re stated
    - How do we ask questions to help us look deeper and probe the situation
    - Appreciation of symbolism and metaphor
    - Ellen Sebastian Chang: “Symbolism and metaphor catapults us toward evolutionary change.”
  - **Directions:**
    - Stand players in a circle (or any cohesive shape that works).
    - The first player begins by acting out a physical activity (i.e. swimming).
    - The second player asks, “What are you doing?”

**THE WORLD AS IT COULD BE HUMAN RIGHTS EDUCATION PROGRAM**  
**CURRICULUM AND RESOURCE GUIDE FOR TEACHERS & ORGANIZATION LEADERS**

Page 12 of 30

- The active player must then come up with an action that is not what they are doing, such as “Reading a book”.
- The second player then begins acting out that response.
- The third player asks, “What are you doing?”
- The second player then provides a response that is not what they are acting out and so on.
- Once everyone has become accustomed to the game, pick up the pace.
- The goal is not to trick your fellow players, but to think spontaneously and be willing to act quickly. The more rounds you play, the quicker and more creative the players should be able to respond.
- **Variation for UDHR Studies:** Use UDHR articles as reference. Create depiction of a given article and state the opposite.
- **My Group/Observation and Choices**
  - **General Purpose:**
    - Demonstrates how we group and identify ourselves
    - Demonstrates how we make choices
  - **Purpose in Connection with UDHR Studies:**
    - Critical thinking with regard to politicizing differences, such as civil rights versus human rights
    - Gain greater understanding of the challenges of being different and standing alone
    - Observe that the more specific we are with a category, the more we marginalize others
  - **Directions:**
    - Students mill around the space silently. The teacher/leader instructs them to begin to observe each other silently. After a minute or less, the teacher asks the students to organize themselves - for example - according to their shoes.
      - (a) Important to emphasize that these choices must be made silently, no talking or gesturing.
      - (b) After each group is established the teacher asks one member to name their group.
    - Repeat the above, change the group to:
      - (a) Bottoms(pants/skirts); tops; jewelry; hair style
      - (b) Then you can become more detailed such as eye color; skin color; ethnicity.
    - The important thing as the teacher/leader is to begin to point out the choices, for example tennis shoes, could be separated by brand. Talk about the courage to stand alone and not feel pressure to just pick a group if this happens.
- **Fake Tai Chi** (Respectfully called "fake tai chi" because the movement imitates the ancient art of Tai Chi, but does not use formal Tai Chi vocabulary.)
  - **General Purpose:**
    - Demonstrate how to be clear with non-verbal communication
    - Create calm, focused classroom environment
    - Give youth in the group the opportunity to lead simple movement
  - **Purpose in Connection with UDHR Studies:**
    - Show the importance of strong, clear leadership
    - Gives the experience of collective effort toward a common goal
  - **Directions:**
    - The group gets into a circle, and the leader begins to do slow, methodical movement that the group follows silently.

**THE WORLD AS IT COULD BE HUMAN RIGHTS EDUCATION PROGRAM  
CURRICULUM AND RESOURCE GUIDE FOR TEACHERS & ORGANIZATION LEADERS**

**Page 13 of 30**

- The leader then chooses different group members to lead movements.
- **Sculpting**
  - **General Purpose:**
    - Practice working in groups
    - Practice giving physical expression to different themes
    - Trust-building around respectful touch
  - **Purpose in Connection with UDHR Studies:**
    - Gives the opportunity to create group movement to portray UDHR themes
    - Gives the experience of collective effort toward a common goal
  - **Directions:**
    - Partner Sculpt: Partners "sculpt" each other into any shape they like, and the rest of the group guesses what the shape represents.
    - Group Sculpt: Partners get into groups of 4, and each person creates a collage of sculpted bodies based on words or themes chosen by the facilitator, based on the group discussion. Examples of themes: "freedom of speech" "justice" "peace" "war"