



2005/2006 Creative Writing Contest for 5th Graders

“Why I am Glad America is a Nation of Immigrants”

The American Immigration Lawyers Association (AILA) is sponsoring the 10th annual national Celebrate America Essay Contest. Open to 5th graders nationwide, the contest helps us to see that America is truly a nation of immigrants by encouraging youth, their families and surrounding communities to consider and appreciate the effects of immigration on their own lives. Contestants write a 500 word essay on “Why I am Glad America is a Nation of Immigrants.” Schools must submit student entries to local AILA Chapters no later than March 1, 2006. The winning entry from each chapter contest is then submitted to the national competition where entries are reviewed by a distinguished panel of judges including U. S. senators and national journalists. Winning entries are printed in the *Congressional Record*.

The national winner and three guests (must include one adult) receive as a grand prize an all expense paid trip to the American Immigration Law Foundation's Annual Benefit Dinner, to be held in San Antonio, Texas in June 2006,

where he or she will be honored and read the winning entry. There also will be additional prizes awarded at the local level for participating schools and students.

For information on how your school can participate, contact the Minnesota AILA contact person, Michelle Rivero, at riveromichel-lecd@qwest.net or (651) 291-0054.

BECOME A RIGHTS SITE!

If your school would like to become a Rights Site and incorporate human rights into your classrooms, please contact Minnesota Advocates for Human Rights! For more information check out the Minnesota Advocates for Human Rights Education Program at www.mnadvocates.org.

KEEP UP THE GREAT WORK, CURRENT RIGHTS SITES!

Interdistrict Downtown School • JJ Hill Magnet Montessori School • P.E.A.S.E. Academy • Pratt Community School • Sandburg Middle School • St. Paul Creative Arts High School • Washinton Technology Magnet Middle School • The Perpich Center for Arts Education

The Minnesota Advocates for Human Rights Education Program would like to express gratitude to its 2004-2005 funders for their very generous support:

American Express Foundation • Beverly Foundation
Irwin Andrew Porter Foundation • The McKnight Foundation



Human Rights Education

The Human Rights Education is designed to introduce international human rights and responsibilities to K-12 students using the Universal Declaration of Human Rights to help students understand and appreciate common human values, encourages them to apply international standards to their own lives, and supports positive student action to remedy human rights violations in their own communities.



The Music Edition!

We are excited to present you with the Fall/Winter issue of our Rights Sites Newsletter! The focus of this edition is MUSIC. Music reaches across cultures and defines social movements. Music has a powerful way of unifying people and is often regarded as universal, a common language understood by all.

Human rights, as defined in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights are the sum of socio-cultural, economic, civic and political rights. Just like music, human rights are considered fundamental and universal regardless of culture, religion or socio-political context.

This issue of Rights Sites News will provide creative strategies for introducing human rights education into existing curriculum through the use of music!

Welcome to The Perpich Center for Arts Education!

The Perpich Center for Arts Education in Golden Valley, is Minnesota Advocates' newest Rights Sites Project partner school! Chris Granias, the lead teacher, first heard about Minnesota Advocates this summer at an Arts workshop in Albert Lea, and was inspired to connect human rights, the arts and immigrant and refugee issues. He is passionate about using his own background as a Greek-American, musician and history buff to reach his students.

In his classroom, “World Music and Culture”, students study world cultures by meeting immigrants and Native Americans who share their music and culture. “By teaching World Music and infusing human rights into his curriculum this year,” says Kathy Seipp of Minnesota Advocates, “he has already made a huge impact on his school and the students.”

Chris teaches a heritage lesson that connects music to immigration. He shares his family history that traces his roots to Greece and has his students investigate a non-living relative and the type of music they probably listened to when they were 16 years old. This gives students a way to appreciate cultural history and the various types of music that exist today.

Having grown up as a young immigrant in Chicago, he can relate to his students' desire to distance themselves from their heritage and focus on becoming “Americanized.” However, he would like his students to know that their education is vital, and that they can do well in school, and become Americans, without neglecting their heritage. Keep up the great work Chris. Welcome, Perpich students, staff and families!

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Thanks To Our Interns
Britny Blomgren
&

Sara Biewslaski
for their hard work on this issue of Rights Sites News!

Understanding Human Rights Through Music and Poetry

(adapted from www.rocklibrary.com)

♪ Rationale:

Oppression is a common issue in the histories of people world wide, yet it is often difficult for students to understand the struggles of others. Poetry and music can be used to explore these issues and circumstances and offers a vehicle for students to internalize the issue of injustice and generate empathy for those whose human rights are not respected.

♪ Objectives:

Through this lesson, students will:

- ♪ Be Exposed to poetry and music from a variety of countries that focus on human rights and oppression;
- ♪ Be Given the opportunity to analyze and interpret poetry and music from a variety of cultures;
- ♪ Be Able to identify the major themes of human rights struggles in poetry and music from various time periods and countries, and the circumstances that surround them;
- ♪ Recognize how poetry and music are used to express political statements and sentiments to listeners;
- ♪ Create their own poem or song lyrics expressing an issue of human rights to be presented to the class.

♪ Time Frame:

Two to three class periods, depending on the length of the class and whether additional activities are tied to the lesson.

♪ Materials:

CD/Tape player, various poems and song lyrics either as handouts or overhead transparencies, and copies of worksheets to use as guides for analyzing specific poems or song lyrics (optional). Students and their families will help you in the process of gathering poems and lyrics to be used in this lesson!

♪ Background:

This lesson may work well as a follow up activity or transition activity after the study of South African Apartheid, the independence of East Timor, the American civil rights movement, the Zapatista rebellion in the Chiapas, the Commu-

nist take over of Tibet, or the 1989 student uprising in Beijing. This lesson can be modified to introduce the issues of human rights and the struggle for human rights as a global concept. Numerous poems and music can be used to address specific or general topics.

♪ Procedures:

Part I

Ask students to brainstorm different words related to the concepts of “rights” and “justice” (instructor would be responsible for writing word on the chalkboard). Once a list has been completed, go through the various terms and ask students to clarify or define their statements. Questions for discussion might be: “What does justice mean?”, “Who protects/ guarantees these rights?”, “What are rights?”, “How can these rights ‘oppressed’?” Allow time for discussion.

Part II

Ask students to find examples of poetry or music that deal with the issue of human rights. Offer examples of popular music to help activate schema. Examples might include: “Children of the Sun” by Rage Against the Machine, “Illegal Search”, by L.L. Cool J, “41 shots”, by Bruce Springsteen, or “Where is the Love?” by Black Eyed Peas. Students develop a list of poems and songs they identify as having themes of human rights and oppression. Have students discuss their understanding of the poems and songs.

Part III

Introduce the poem by Martin Niemoeller to demonstrate how poetry can be used as an instrument to express the idea of “human rights” as expressed previously by the students. Allow time for students to analyze the poem and formulate their answers. After five to 10 minutes, ask the students the following questions to generate discussion: What is the major theme of the poem? What are the historical circumstances that surround this poem? What is the author saying about responsibility? Do you share this point of view?

FALL/WINTER EVENTS

| | |
|---------------------------|--|
| October - December | Intermedia Arts presents: Immigration Status - Faith in Women. This installment includes art, film, and performances celebrating the strength and faith of immigrant and indigenous women. Visit www.intermediaarts.org for more information. |
| November 12 - December 31 | Homelessness Awareness - the Outsider Art Center presents an art show featuring artists who have experienced homelessness. At the Mall of America. For more information, visit www.outsidersandothers.org . |
| November 25 - December 10 | 16 Days of Activism Against Gender Violence! For more information, go to: www.cwgl.rutgers.edu/16days/home.html |
| December 1 - 3 | Saint Paul Chamber Orchestra: Mozart’s Turkish Violin Concerto, Thursday 8 p.m., Friday 10:30 a.m. & 8 p.m., Saturday 8 p.m., at the Ordway Center for Performing Arts. |
| December 1 | World AIDS Day |
| December 4 | Czech and Slovak Sokol Minnesota hosts its annual Christmas party. For more information visit www.sokolmn.org . |
| December 5 | International Volunteer Day for Economic and Social Development. |
| December 6 | Choropampa: The Price of Gold. A film about the struggle of the town of Choropampa, Peru to win compensation from the Yanacocha gold mine after a mercury spill results in serious illness. 6 p.m. Resource Center of the Americas. www.americas.org . |
| December 9 | International Human Rights Day! Join Minnesota Advocates for Human Rights and the University of Minnesota Human Rights Center for a seminar, live performance and pane discussion on historic and current situations of discrimination. For more information, check out www.mnadvocates.org . |
| December 15 | Developing Power: Women’s Human Rights. Arvonne Fraser will discuss the international women’s human rights movement. |
| March 10, 2006 | Lecture - Incomplete Conquest: Colonialism and Continuity in the Guatemalan Dance of the Conquest. Matthew Krystal, Assistant Professor of Anthropology, North Central College, Illinois. 7:30 p.m. Drew Science Building, Room 118, Hamline University. \$5.00 general admission. |

H-Project Saves the Day!
Hmong Music in Minnesota
by Pia JaHeng Yaj

Every social movement needs a strong leader to take a stand on the issues and motivate others to get involved. Social movements need that extra inspiration to overcome the challenges that lie ahead, and with so many challenges to deal with in this world, it is easy to become discouraged and to lose hope. However, there is hope in music.

With songs like Bob Marley's "Get up, stand up" to Bob Dylan's "Like a Rolling Stone", music has long been a force of inspiration for the human mind in times of desperation. We are inspired by soothing melodies and influential words. It sparks minds to really make an effort to reach into our own spirits, which we do not understand fully and go beyond what is measured by science and to make a difference.

Hmong people have been through much social devastation from being persecuted by the Chinese government, invaded by French soldiers to the possible acts of genocide by the current Pathet Lao Government. Times have changed for Hmong musicians. Often seen as just entertainers with typical songs of love, romance, and heartbreak, hmong musicians are creating more meaningful and inspirational music these days.

ENTER 'THE H PROJECT'

"THIS IS ART FOR SOCIAL CHANGE" is what you'll read on the cover of The H Project CD. The H Project is a compilation CD that includes a variety of musical genres that include rock, hip hop, r&b, folk, spoken word, poetry and so much more by artists from around the country who have written songs and poems to raise awareness about the current human right violations and possible acts of genocide of the Hmong people in the jungles of Laos.

The H Project is dedicated to four goals: 1) to give artists an opportunity to use art as a vehicle for social change; 2) to raise awareness of the situation in Laos and encourage action; 3) to promote unity within the Hmong community; 4) and to fundraise for Hmoob Hlub Hmoob (H3), a local group of activists working to provide humanitarian aid for the Hmong living in Laos.

"Every submission was like a pot of gold because it was the product of another person's time and effort put into a cause we were all passionate about," said Kathy Mouacheupao, one of the organizers of this project.

In this way musicians can really make a difference in society. In this way artists can be seen as...superheroes. Even though the belief in superheroes is a fantasy that most of us eventually grow out of, unfortunately so can "hope" be for a solution to the social problems of this world. However, musicians do have the ability to bring hope to others. Musicians may not have the gift of superhuman strength, or human flight, faster than the speed of sound, but they do have something that is intangible. Musicians have the gift to inspire the human spirit.

The H-Project, with superhero aliases like "Knowstalgic" of the Hip-Hop duo Delicious Venom, Sonic Rain, and Shattered Echo'Z, these musicians have a quality in their art that can really move hearts and minds and the ability to create truly powerful music. These are music groups that have contributed to the H-Project CD as musicians and as volunteer activists.

This movement of artists is dedicated to making social change, so hope is on the way! These musicians will forever be connected to musicians like Bob Marley, John Lennon and Bob Dylan, for their commitment to using art for social change. Hmong music saves the day!

Thanks to Pia JaHeng Yaj, a local hmong writer and music aficionado, for contributing this story to the Rights Sites Newsletter!

KATRINA AFTERMATH- STUDENTS CAN HELP!

Thanks to an outpouring of generosity, Hurricane Katrina relief efforts have already topped \$1 billion. However, Katrina survivors face ongoing challenges and will continue to need outside assistance for months and years to come. This tragedy reminds us that human rights are not uniquely international issues. These are a few ways your class can respond to this disaster.

WINTER CLOTHING DRIVE. Many survivors have relocated to colder climates and will need warm clothing to get through the winter months.

DONATE FOOD. The Red Cross and other disaster relief organizations will continue to need non-perishable food and personal items for individuals, especially during the holiday season. www.redcross.org.

GET LOCAL. Investigate your community's emergency preparedness. Have students develop emergency plans with their families.

Part III continued...

What is the major theme of the poem? What are the historical circumstances that surround this poem? What is the author saying about responsibility? Do you share this point of view? The poem by Martin Niemoeller is on the following page.

Part IV

Distribute to students packets with various poems and song lyrics. Provide a variety of old and new, and include diverse genders, styles, etc. Allow time for students to read silently. Have the student choose one poem or song to analyze. Students should be told to look for the theme, examples of oppression, and historical circumstance, and what led the author to express this point of view. Depending on the prior knowledge of human rights and the curriculum content covered in the class, this aspect of the lesson can be student driven or the instructor may lead the class through each of the various poems and songs to help provide historical background.

Part V

Once students have selected an individual poem or song, have them answer the following questions either on a worksheet or in a journal:

- ♪ What is the theme of the poem/ song? Where do you find it expressed most clearly?
- ♪ What is the poem/ song saying about human rights and justice (or injustice/oppression)?
- ♪ What images reinforce the meaning behind the poem/ song?
- ♪ What are the historical circumstances surrounding this poem/song? (briefly summarize)
- ♪ Do you agree or disagree with the ideas expressed in this poem/song?
- ♪ Is there a group of people in this country (or elsewhere in the world) that would agree or disagree with this poem/song?
- ♪ Who are they and why do you think they would agree or disagree?

Part VI

Allow time for students to read and answer the questions. This may be done in class or as a homework assignment for the following day depending on the time frame of the class. Once students have completed their analysis of the poem or

song, ask each student to read their responses to the class in reference to the questions asked. Allow other students to offer feedback to the answers and statements given. This may be conducted as a class discussion for the entire class period depending on how much time is needed and for what clarifications the instructor needs to provide on different topics if necessary.

Part VII

Students will be asked to create their own poem/ song. Urge them to use outside resources, for example magazine articles, newspapers, television and radio broadcasts, etc. It is important for each student to internalize the aspect of human rights that they feel affects him or her most. Encourage students to express their feelings in the form they feel most passionate about (i.e. poetry, rap, rock, thrash, metal, etc.). Each student will present or perform their original work to the class. Provide the following guidelines for the assignment:

- ♪ Create your own poem or song describing an aspect of human rights and oppression in society. Follow the guidelines below and be prepared to share your work with the class.
- ♪ Poems/songs needs to be creative, unique and original. (Do not plagiarize someone's work!)
- ♪ Poems must be over ten lines in length.
- ♪ Write a one-page summary detailing the major theme and background of your work.
- ♪ State how your poem/ song relates to the concept of human rights and justice.

♪ Evaluation:

Students should receive classwork and participation credit for completed and performed works. Rubrics for original work and presentation are left to the discretion of the instructor.



Be sure to check out the suggested readings and recordings on the next page! And for more lesson plan ideas that utilize music, check out www.rocklibrary.com.

A Poem by
Pastor Martin Niemoeller
Holocaust Survivor

First they came for the Jews,
but I wasn't a Jew, so I didn't react.

Then they came for the communists,
but I wasn't a communist, so I didn't object.

Then they came for the homosexuals,
but I wasn't a homosexual, so I didn't stand up.

Then they came for the political activists,
but I wasn't a political activist, so I didn't protest.

Then they came for me...
and by that time no one was left to stand up.

Selected Recordings

- ♪ "Message in the Belly" recorded by Dignable Planets Blowout Comb, Pendulum Records, 1994.
- ♪ "Zimbabwe" recorded by Bob Marley and the Wailers Survival, Island Records, 1979.
- ♪ "Get Up, Stand Up" recorded by Bob Marley Burnin', Cayman Music, 1973.
- ♪ "Seconds" recorded by U2 War, Island Records, 1982.
- ♪ "Know Your Rights" recorded by The Clash (Combat Rock, CBS Records, 1982.)
- ♪ "Holiday in Cambodia" recorded by the Dead Kennedys (Give Me Convenience or Give Me Death, Alternative Tentacles, 1987.)

Suggested Poems

- "God to Hungry Child" by Langston Hughes, Good Morning Revolution, 1938.
- "Palestinian" by Harun Hashin Raskid, An Anthology of Modern Arabic Poetry, 1974.
- "Ain't I A Woman" by Sojourner Truth, The Liberator 22 March 16, 1855.
- "I Am Only One Person" author unknown, Open Minds to Equality, 1983.
- "Still I Rise" by Maya Angelou.

OUR NEWEST RIGHTS SITE - The Perpich Center for Arts Education!



Chris Granas shares his passion for music and history in his World Music and Culture class. Granas is shown here with his students, Erol Mastafar, and an exchange teacher from Peru.

Grant Opportunity for Educators!

The Teaching Tolerance project of the Southern Poverty Law Center offers grants of up to \$2,000 to K-12 classroom teachers for implementing tolerance and youth activism projects in their schools and communities. Proposals from other educators such as community organizations and churches will be considered on the basis of direct student impact.

Teaching Tolerance grants are made possible by gifts from supporters of the Southern Poverty Law Center. <http://www.splcenter.org/>

For more information, check out: www.tolerance.org/teach/grants/guide.jsp

Musicians to Check Out!

*Zap Mama



WHO: Marie Daulne, born in Zaire, raised in Belgium, now living in Philadelphia.

WHAT: Zap Mama is a Worldbeat/Hip-Hop collective.

"I'm talking about all the humans who made this world better, their philosophy and their fight. I want my work to show respect for those people. Because I know that tomorrow we're going to be ancestors, and that is the kind of ancestor I want to represent." -Zap Mama on her new album, *Ancestry*

*System of a Down



WHO: Four musicians with Middle Eastern roots

WHAT: Alternative/Metal Rock

"I believe in our collective ability to resist, whether it's occupation, mistreatment, or human rights violations around the world."

-Serj Tankian about his band's work in human rights

*Jesús Purisaca

WHO: Jesús Purisaca, born in Peru and living in Minneapolis.

WHAT: Latin American folk, pop, praise and worship music.



A lawyer, teacher and self-taught musician and singer, Jesús has always been dedicated to helping others. He started teaching children to read and write at age 15 and as a lawyer he provided free legal help to poor people, including helping people in a squatter's settlement to claim their land titles. Jesús would like his students to learn that we can respect others even when we don't agree with each other.

*Billy Bragg



WHO: A British artist with a long history of grass-roots political involvement.

WHAT: Politically-charged folk

"I saw a man build a shelter in his garden today/
and we stood their idly chatting/"

He said, "No, no I don't think war will come"/ Yet still he carried on digging" -lyrics from Bragg's song "Rumours of War".

WHO: Maya Arulpragasam, born in Sri Lanka and living in London.

WHAT: Rap/Hip-Hop/Dancehall

*M.I.A.

"I feel we've been robbed of the word 'revolutionary' because I really like that word. In this world, if you're fighting for freedom, for independence, you're no longer a revolutionary, you're a terrorist. It's a tag put on by America."

-Maya Arulpragasam

