

Human Rights Through the Lens

A Human Rights Education Resource

for use in Civic, Social and Political Education (CSPE)

(This resource may also be of use in Religious Education, Geography, SPHE and Transition Year)



Irish Council for
Civil Liberties

A project of the ICCL Human Rights Film Awards

www.humanrightsfilmawards.org



Irish Council for
Civil Liberties

For further information contact:

Irish Council for Civil Liberties

9-13 Blackhall Place, Dublin 7 Tel: 01 799 4504 Fax: 01 799 4512

Email: info@iccl.ie www.iccl.ie www.humanrightsfilmawards.org

The Irish Council for Civil Liberties (ICCL) is Ireland's leading independent human rights watchdog, which monitors, educates and campaigns in order to secure full enjoyment of human rights for everyone. Founded in 1976 by Mary Robinson and others, the ICCL has played a leading role in some of the most successful human rights campaigns in Ireland.

Since its launch in 2009, the ICCL Human Rights Film Awards has called on filmmakers to contribute to human rights discourse in Ireland using the medium of film. This resource draws on films that reached the shortlist of the Awards in 2009 and 2010. All shortlisted films can be viewed at the Awards website www.humanrightsfilmawards.org.

What we do:

- Advocate for positive changes in the area of human rights;
- Monitor government policy to make sure that it complies with international standards;
- Conduct original research and publish reports on issues as diverse as equal rights for all families, the right to privacy, police accountability and judicial accountability;
- Run campaigns to raise public and political awareness of human rights, justice and equality issues;
- Work closely with other key stakeholders in the human rights, justice and equality sectors.



Professional Development Service for Teachers – Cultural and Environmental Education

Support for the Cultural & Environmental Education suite of subjects is based in
Co. Wexford Education Centre,
Milehouse Road, Enniscorthy, Co. Wexford.

Cultural & Environmental Education National Co-ordinator

Conor Harrison

087 - 2405710

conorharrison@pdst.ie

www.pdst.ie, then click on PP Cultural and Environmental, then click on CSPE

The PDST is funded by the Department of Education and Skills under the National Development Plan, 2007-2013

The films contained within this resource are the work of their respective filmmakers, and to not necessarily reflect the opinions of the ICCL or the PDST.



Human Rights Through the Lens

A Human Rights Education Resource

Contents

LESSON 1: Tomato Soup - 1

LESSON 2: 8 Things to Remember - 3

LESSON 3: Gaza: Post Operation Cast Lead - 7



Irish Council for
Civil Liberties

LESSON 1:

Tomato Soup

Directed by Paul O'Brien

View online at <http://vimeo.com/11705908>



LEARNING OUTCOMES:

To appreciate the need to respect the rights of older people.

FILM SUMMARY:

This 'stop-motion' animation by Paul O'Brien tells the tale of an older man who is banished from the family dinner table for being a sloppy eater. The film deals with the prejudices that older people face on a daily basis, sometimes even from their loved ones. The film's message is loud and clear -we all hope to be old one day, and older people must be treated with the dignity, inclusion and respect they deserve.

CLASS OUTLINE:

Show the film.

- Ask students in pairs to discuss their feelings.
- In larger groups, ask students to come to a consensus about their reaction.
- Each group shares with the class their feelings on the treatment of older people, being mindful this subject may be upsetting for some students.
- Ask each group to role-play an alternative version of the same scenario.
- Allow time for each roleplay to be viewed and reviewed by the rest of the class.
- Conclude by asking students to consider the rights being denied here.

HOMEWORK ACTIVITIES:

- Design a poster highlighting the importance of respecting older people.
- Write an article for the school magazine encouraging students to be respectful of older people.
- Write a poem appreciating an older relative.

POSSIBLE EXTENSION ACTIVITIES:

- Interview an older person.
- Carry out a walking debate on whether or not students believe elder abuse is a problem in our society today.
- Research the work of the Senior Help Line and similar organisations (see overleaf).

Action Project Idea

- Visit your local care centre for older people.
- Invite a group of senior citizens to your class (see organisation list below).
- Why not make a short film about the rights of the elderly and the responsibility of society to meet their needs? Online tutorials and guidance on filmmaking are available from www.fjs.ie/interactive.

Definition of Elder Abuse

A single or repeated act or lack of appropriate action occurring within any relationship where there is an expectation of trust which causes harm or distress to an older person or violates their human rights.

See www.ncpop.ie

The Senior Help Line

The Senior Help Line is a confidential listening service for older people by older people for the price of a local call anywhere in Ireland.

The lines are open each day from 10am to 4pm, each evening from 7pm to 10pm, seven days a week, 365 days a year.

It is run by the Third Age Centre, Summerhill, Co Meath.

The Summerhill Third Age Centre visits classrooms to talk to students about being older. Sometimes they use 'artefacts' from their own youth to aid the discussions.

Visit their website at: www.seniorhelpline.ie

Other organisations working for the rights of older people

Age Action Ireland - www.ageaction.ie

The National Centre for the Protection of Older People - www.ncpop.ie

Older and Bolder - www.olderandbolder.ie

LESSON 2:

8 THINGS TO REMEMBER

Directed by Aoibheann O'Sullivan

View online at: <http://vimeo.com/5013933>



LEARNING OUTCOMES:

To gain an understanding of the rights and responsibilities of human rights defenders.

SUMMARY:

In this film, the Shannonwatch Group is concerned that certain aeroplanes passing through Shannon Airport might be involved in illegal activity, in violation of Irish and international human rights law. Shannonwatch feel strongly about this, and since 2003 its members have documented the planes travelling in and out of Shannon to gather evidence to bring to the Gardaí. This film follows their activities, and examines how they carry out their information-gathering. It also looks at the role of the Gardaí and Airport Police, whose job it is to investigate illegal activities while ensuring the security of the Airport.

CLASS OUTLINE:

- Ask students to brainstorm what problems and injustices they feel are/ have been faced by people in:
 - Their neighbourhood
 - In Ireland
 - Around the world.

Use recent news and current affairs stories as points of reference as necessary.

- Ask students to brainstorm about what steps ordinary people can take to improve these problems. List these on a blackboard/ flipchart.
- Ask students to consider what freedom of assembly is and what freedom of expression means. In particular, consider the rights and responsibilities involved in exercising these freedoms. Also ask them to consider what the Government's duties and responsibilities are. See notes below for discussion points.
- Introduce the film (see summary above). Ask the students to list the steps being taken by individuals in the film (linking this to the film title, '8 Things to Remember'). Also ask them to note what other participants feature in the documentary (ie. Airport Police and the Gardaí).

Steps being Taken	Participants

- Show the film.
- Compare the film, and the steps taken by the Shannonwatch group in gathering evidence on their issue, with the steps brainstormed by the students in the earlier discussion. Some points to focus on:

- Preparation and determination
 - Carefully gathering evidence
 - Asserting your rights to assemble peacefully
 - Behaving responsibly and respectfully
 - Taking your concerns, backed up by evidence, to the appropriate authorities (in this case, the Gardaí).
- Discuss the role of the Gardaí and the Airport Police – their rights and responsibilities.
 - Are they respecting the right of the group to assemble and express themselves peacefully?
 - Are they taking the group’s concerns seriously?
- Consider the behaviour of the protesters.
 - Are they behaving appropriately towards the Gardaí and Airport Police?
 - Are they ensuring that the safety and security of everyone is being protected?
 - Are they complying with the instructions of the Gardaí and Airport Police, even if they disagree?
- Consider whether the maker of this film is sympathetic with the Shannonwatch protesters or with the Gardaí/ Airport Police. Or is the filmmaker showing understanding and sympathy for the situation of both? How?
- Ask the students to decide, following the discussion, whether or not this film has been successful in documenting and expressing the human rights concerns of the Shannonwatch Group. If not, what could the filmmaker have done better?

Homework Activities

- Write a profile of the work of a human rights defender (refer to the Front Line and Amnesty websites).
- Write a report on the work of Front Line, and how they support and help human rights defenders around the world.

Possible Extension Activities

- Watch some further films telling the story of human rights defenders, for example:
 - *Erin Brockovitch* – the story of a lawyer who works to hold a company responsible for the pollution of a small American town. (cert 15)
 - *Conviction* – the story of a woman who campaigns to prove the innocence of her imprisoned brother. (cert 15)
 - *Dead Man Walking* – the story of a nun who develops a friendship with a man awaiting execution in America. (cert 15)
 - *Invictus* – the story of Nelson Mandela’s attempts to unify South Africans during the Rugby World Cup in 1995. (cert PG)

Action Project Idea

“Raising awareness of human rights today/ researching/ documenting/ investigating”

Consider if there is a human rights problem or other problem in:

- Your neighbourhood
- In Ireland
- Around the world.

Points for consideration and discussion:

- Think about how you would document it. Consider using film or audio as a tool to document the problem and to record the opinions of those affected.
- Consider the importance of gathering solid evidence and making sure that your arguments are sound.
- Think about who is responsible for addressing the problem.
- Think about the best way to bring the problem to the attention of those in charge.
- Consider the responsibilities you have if you go about documenting people’s problems and experiences.

Some definitions and discussion points to focus on in class:

What is a Human Rights Defender?

Human rights defenders are people who, individually or with others, act peacefully to promote or protect human rights.

Read the UN Declaration on Human Rights Defenders, available at:
www2.ohchr.org/english/issues/defenders/declaration.htm

There is an Irish organisation that works to protect human rights defenders around the world. They are called Front Line. Learn more at: www.frontlinedefenders.org

Amnesty International also works to protect human rights defenders. Their Irish website is www.amnesty.ie

Information for Teachers

Conducting research and speaking out - rights and responsibilities:

Rights

The UN Declaration on Human Rights Defenders, the European Convention on Human Rights and Irish law all protect your right to:

- conduct human rights work individually and in association with others
- meet or assemble peacefully
- seek, obtain, receive and hold information relating to human rights
- make complaints relating to human rights and to have such complaints taken seriously
- submit suggestions and proposals to government for the improvement of human rights.

Responsibilities

- If assembling or holding a protest, you must behave peacefully.
- In organising an assembly or meeting, you must ensure that safety is a priority.
- You must comply with the instructions of the Garda Síochána when in a public space.
- When conducting research or gathering information on a human rights issue, you must do so in an appropriate manner, respecting the law and the rights of others.
- When speaking out on a human rights problem, you must ensure that you have your facts straight.
- You must exercise your freedom to express yourself responsibly. You should avoid attacking someone's good name and reputation, or using violent, abusive or hurtful language towards or about other people, even if you disagree with them.

State Actors, such as the Garda Síochána – duties and responsibilities:

- The State, including the Gardaí, must respect your rights to assemble and express yourself and must put appropriate measures in place to allow for this.
- The State must ensure that the rights of all people are protected, and can restrict access to information, or access to public places, if this is necessary to protect public order.
- If you present evidence of human rights violations or other breaches of the law, the State must take this seriously and, where appropriate, investigate.

LESSON 3:

Gaza: Post Operation Cast Lead

Directed by Dearbhla Glynn

View online at: <http://www.vimeo.com/12133297>



LEARNING OUTCOMES:

To explore the humanitarian considerations surrounding conflict, and the effect of conflict on civilians and particularly children.

SUMMARY OF FILM:

This film explores the aftermath of 'Operation Cast Lead', an operation conducted by the Israel Defence Forces in the Gaza Strip in late 2008 and early 2009. The film follows a number of Irish people who travelled to Gaza, and their interactions with locals who have suffered the effects of the conflict. The film also contains footage of Irishman John Ging, who at the time was the head of the United Nation's Relief and Works Agency in Gaza, and who spoke out about the effect this military operation was having on civilians.

CLASS OUTLINE:

- Begin class with a discussion of what war and conflict are and ask the students to name wars and conflicts that they have learned about in school and through following the news. List these on a blackboard/ flipchart.
- Ask the students to consider the effects that these conflicts have had on civilians, and list these on the blackboard/ flipchart.
- Ask the students what they think can be done to ensure that civilians are better protected during war and conflict. List these on the blackboard/ flipchart.
- Show the film.
- Ask the students to discuss how they felt about the film. Some suggested questions to stimulate discussion:
 - Was it sad/ upsetting?
 - Did they feel they got a good picture of the challenges faced by normal people during armed conflict?
 - What effect do they think violence has on young people? Refer to the young man who lost his legs and the images of children with weapons.
 - Give examples of people trying to go about their daily lives (e.g. the fishermen, the young girl doing her maths homework).
 - What do they feel could be done to improve the situation of civilians in Gaza?
 - Do they feel the film was well made?
 - Do they feel that the filmmaker was sympathetic with the civilians of Gaza?
 - Was the film balanced in its treatment of the Gaza conflict?
 - Did the film go into the background/ origins of the conflict?
 - What voices / viewpoints are missing from the film?
 - Is film a good way of educating people about the effects of war/ conflict? If yes, why? If no, why?

- Conclude by asking the students to compare the effects of conflict on the people of Gaza with those brainstormed earlier on the blackboard/flipchart.

Homework Activities

- Write to a young person from Gaza and compare your lives.
- Write a summary of this film for a TV magazine.

Possible Extension Activities

- Simulate a 'round-table' discussion between young people from Gaza, and young people from Ireland, and compare your lives.
- Imagine Gaza in 20 years time and write an account of your hopes for its future.
- Consider the similarities and differences between the way this filmmaker documents events in Gaza with the documentary approach of the maker of *8 Things to Remember*.

Action Project Idea

- Invite a guest speaker from Amnesty International, Frontline Human Rights Defenders or Trócaire, to discuss armed conflict and its human cost.
- Why not make a short film about conflict in the world today and how it affects the lives of civilians. Online tutorials and guidance on filmmaking are available from www.fis.ie/interactive.

Useful Links

Some organisations focusing on conflict and the effects of conflict:

www.un.org

www.hrw.org

www.trocaire.org

www.amnesty.ie

www.frontlinedefenders.org

Human Rights Through the Lens - Marrying Human Rights, Film and Education

This education resource draws on some of the human rights-themed films that made the shortlist of the 2009 and 2010 ICCL Human Rights Film Awards.

It is designed to encourage in-class discussion and reflection on human rights, and how film can be used to communicate and bring them to life.

Designed for the CSPE curriculum, the resource is also suitable for Religion, Geography, SPHE and Transition Year. It contains lesson plans based around three films by award-winning young Irish filmmakers. As well as outlining discussion and classroom activities around the films, it provides suggestions for follow up activities and Action Projects. It also encourages students to take inspiration and make a film on an issue they are passionate about.

In 2011, the ICCL Human Rights Short Film Awards introduced a category aimed at second-level students. The Human Rights in Under a Minute Challenge calls on young people to create their own 30-60 second human rights film. We would ask teachers using this resource to encourage their students to enter this exciting new competition. Full details are available at www.humanrightsfilmawards.org.

The lesson plans and more films from the ICCL Human Rights Film Awards are also available to view online via www.humanrightsfilmawards.org.

This educational resource was developed by Kathryn Moore, the Irish Council for Civil Liberties (ICCL) and the Professional Development Service for Teachers (PDST).

Kathryn Moore would like to thank the students of St Dominic's College, Cabra, for their input in the development of this resource.

Design: spacecreative.ie

Kindly supported by Trócaire's Mobilising for Justice Scheme and by the Professional Development Service for Teachers (PDST)