

## Learning Guide Unit 8

**Reading Assignment**

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As you read the learning resources, consider the following:

1. Is a global ethic possible? What do you think are some fundamental ethical ideas that should guide how individuals interact with each other globally?
  2. How do you interpret the idea that different aspects of a global ethic—like human rights, environmental responsibility, and good governance—are interconnected? Why is this interdependence significant?
  3. How can the principles outlined in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights help individuals fulfill their responsibilities as global citizens? What actions can you take to promote these responsibilities in your community?
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**Read:**

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1. Internet Encyclopedia of Philosophy. (n.d.). *Human rights*. Retrieved July 25, 2024, from <https://iep.utm.edu/hum-rts/>

Human rights are fundamental rights that belong to every person in the world, from birth until death. This reading explores the history, importance, and various perspectives on human rights, delving into their philosophical roots. Please pay attention in particular to the two ways rights tend to be grounded: through a natural law or an interest theory approach, and through a will theory approach. Questions on these approaches are bound to appear on the quiz. Reflecting on this article will help you understand your own views on ethics and justice.

2. United Nations. (n.d.). *Universal Declaration of Human Rights*. Retrieved July 25, 2024, from <https://www.un.org/en/about-us/universal-declaration-of-human-rights>

Be sure to read very carefully this famous document. A number of the quiz questions will be drawn from this document.

3. Global Citizenship Commission. (2016). Human Rights and a Global Ethic. In G. Brown (Ed.), *The Universal Declaration of Human Rights in the 21st century: A living document in a changing world* (1st ed., Vol. 2, pp. 105–108). Open Book Publishers.  
<http://www.jstor.org/stable/j.ctt1bpmb7v.15>

The promulgation of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) in 1948 marked a significant shift in how individuals globally perceive their relationships with their governments and each other. Beyond merely listing rights, the UDHR has fostered a “common conscience” among humans, emphasizing that violations of rights in one part of the world resonate elsewhere. “Injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere,” in the words of Martin Luther King Jr. This document is considered a foundational element of a modern global ethic, which encompasses fundamental ethical ideas like human dignity and the principles arising from an increasingly interdependent global society. As the world continues to globalize, there is a pressing need for an ethic of global citizenship, which acknowledges shared responsibilities and challenges.

**NOTE:** To access these articles, visit the UoPeople Library and click on the link to JSTOR. Search for the complete name of the article.

4. United Nations. (n.d.). *Member states*. Retrieved July 25, 2024, from <https://www.un.org/en/about-us/member-states>

Almost every country in the world is a member of the UN. Countries such as the Vatican State (the Catholic Church), while not members, do endorse the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. Can you find your own country in the list?

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**Watch:**

1. TED-Ed. (2015, October 15). *What are the universal human rights?* - *Benedetta Berti* [Video]. YouTube.

This video provides a nice, animated overview of human rights. It explores the different types of rights and also indicates areas in which our understanding of human rights can evolve.

