

Schema Activation

Understanding the Language of the UN Declaration of Human Rights Preamble

What is a schema?

A schema (plural = schemata) is a cognitive framework for understanding a concept. In other words, it is a set of ideas you have in your head that helps you make sense of new information.

Activating schema for Human Rights Educaiton

When we activate schema, we draw on our cognitive framework in order to better understand what certain words, phrases, texts, and/or ideas mean. In this unit, you will encounter several new and difficult concepts, but they often relate to things you experience in your everyday life. Therefore, you can better understand these new concepts by trying to link them to things that you already know.

I have chosen a set of words that connect to foundational ideas in the UNDHR. You may or may not be familiar with the words, and those you do know you might have heard in a different context. The goal is to try and understand how they might be used in the context of the United Nations. Also, don't worry if they are totally new to you now; our job is to *begin* building a framework for thinking about these concepts. Find ways to link these new words with familiar experiences and previous knowledge. That way, when we encounter these concepts in the readings, they will be easier to understand

Assignment: each of you will be responsible for one word that you will present to the class. You will need to define the word, tell what part of speech it is, use it in a sentence, and then give us a visual that helps you understand that word.

- 1) **freedom**
- 2) **justice**
- 3) **dignity**
- 4) **peace**
- 5) **respect**
- 6) **tyranny**
- 7) **oppression**
- 8) **inalienable**
- 9) **progressive**
- 10) **rule of law**
- 11) **standard of living**
- 12) **nation**
- 13) **universal**