

## 1. Definitions:

- Values: is a set of norms and standards that describe something or actions that are best to do or live upon
- Human Rights: moral principles or norms that describe certain standards for human beings and which are protected (or should be) by law or legal entities.

## 2. Introduction:

Humanity was governed from its beginning with global values (sometimes called absolute) that determine the best conduct of people towards themselves, other human beings and towards their surroundings. Such values or norms did not vary between cultures and civilizations. Such values simply describes actions or things as “good” or “bad”, for example telling truth is “good” lying is “bad”, being honest is “good”, stealing is “bad”....etc. These unwritten codes are universal and agreed upon globally and are deeply implemented in humanity. However, when it comes with dealing with others, issues become more complicated. Throughout time, the definition of fellow human beings was governed by cultural and power aspects (economical powers, material powers etc.). Many codes of conduct were –and still are- present that govern the way you treat others, and several questions will automatically have to be answered to follow, at the end, a certain behavior. The one am dealing with man or woman? Rich or poor? White, black, asian, Indian, .....? Is he/she from my class? From my country? From my city? What is his/her religion? And many many questions.

Even before writing was discovered, the absolute values and rights were appreciated and felt, most of the time by the guidance of religion. Most religions have codes of

equality and rights in general, however, the first written code of rights or laws (even though debated) is the one written by Hammurabi (Figure 1) more than 2000 BC.



Figure 1: An inscription of the Code of Hammurabi

The other written charter of rights was issued by Cyrus (Figure 2) more than 500 BC, this was also debated as they do not represent global human rights and were just propaganda to win the mind and heart of the defeated locals, nevertheless, the fact they were written and gained applause verify the fact that equality and rights are deep rooted in human beings minds and souls.



Figure 2: The Cyrus cylinder of Cyrus the Great, founder of the Achaemenid Persian Empire

## 2. Methodology:

These questions show that there is a problem in our conception of a human being, and hence their rights. There is an issue also in the concept of equality. Many barriers participated in the inequality of human beings and hence in their achievement of their rights. These include

- Gender
- Race
- Religion
- Class and rank (economic, or other type of classes)
- Geographical location (or country or part of it)
- Age

In addition to many other classifications depending on culture and society, such as position, education etc. each should be discussed by students and give examples. Also a discussion should be held to evaluate such classifications of human and hence their rights, whether it is “good” or “bad”.

Students will be asked to evaluate human rights in various locations in the world, bringing examples

Students are encouraged to differentiate between equality, equity, just and fair. Such commonly used terms in society and media, what these terms mean to them.

A definition of the basic values that guide them in evaluating their own – and others- behavior will be worked upon.

A list of the basic human rights will be worked out.

A definition and evaluation of the social (and possibly legal) responsibility individuals should carry to provide a just and equal society for all in the globe. And is this possible? (Debate)