

Human Rights Knowledge Organizer

1. Key People

Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.	A Christian who campaigned peacefully for human rights in the USA. He based his actions on Christian ideas of humankind as God's family.
Dr. B. R. Ambedkar	A Buddhist who campaigned for equal rights for Dalits (Untouchables) in Indian society.
Christian Aid	An aid organization that works "to promote sustainable development, strive for social justice and pursue our vision of a world without poverty."
The Karuna Trust	"Inspired by Buddhist values, we exist to end caste-based discrimination, poverty and inequality in India and Nepal."
The 969 Movement	A nationalist movement opposed to what they see as Islam's expansion in predominantly Buddhist Burma. The three digits of 969 "symbolise the virtues of the Buddha, Buddhist practices and the Buddhist community".

4. Themes

discrimination 	poverty 	wealth 
human rights 	social justice 	

2. You also need to know...

- Buddhism and Christianity have similar teachings that can be applied to human rights. The **Five Precepts** and the **5th to 10th Commandments** all encourage an awareness of how actions affect others' lives.
- The Bible says all humans are made in the **image of God**, so they are of equal value.
- The **dharma** (Buddha's teaching) is said to help Buddhists **stop dukkha** in themselves and other beings, too. The Noble Eightfold Path encourages the development of **metta** (loving kindness), **karuna** (compassion) and **Right Action** towards themselves and others.
- In the New Testament, Saint Paul says that someone's **gender or background is irrelevant** if they become a Christian; "...you are **all one** in Christ Jesus."
- In the New Testament, it's said that Jesus talked to a **Samaritan woman** at a well. When Jesus asked for a drink, the woman said, "You are a [male] Jew and I am a Samaritan woman. How can you ask for a drink?" Jesus **ignored** their backgrounds, befriended her and addressed her spiritual needs.
- Martin Luther King's** personal conviction was that every person should have **equal opportunities** regardless of their race, religion or gender. This was influenced by his Christian beliefs, one of which was that people should show selfless love for others, **agape**. He peacefully campaigned against **segregation** laws in America.
- Dr. Ambedkar** was an Untouchable in India who converted to Buddhism. He said that Buddhism is the only religion that can deal with a world of **discrimination and suffering**.
- If asked, you can use **any example** of when religious conviction has **conflicted** with the law, e.g. **St. Oscar Romero** speaking out against oppression in El Salvador or religious communities opposing **clothing laws** in France
- The Buddha taught that people should **enjoy** their wealth, but also **divide it up**; a quarter for what they want, half for business and a quarter for savings.
- The **second noble truth** is that we suffer because we crave and want things. If we live according to the **Middle Way**, we're far less likely to want to build wealth for its own sake and suffer because of that.
- Giving food and clothing to Buddhist monks and nuns can happen every day in some Buddhist communities. This is called **dana**, which means generosity or offering.
- Jesus' parable of The Rich Man and Lazarus teaches that people should be helped **out of poverty**.

3. Key words

ensorship: The practice of suppressing and limiting access to materials considered obscene, offensive or a threat to security

discrimination: Treating groups of people or individuals differently, based on prejudice

extremism: Believing in and supporting ideas that are very far from what most people consider correct or reasonable

human rights: The basic entitlements of all human beings

personal conviction: A strong feeling or belief in something

prejudice: Pre-judging; judging people to be inferior or superior without cause

relative and absolute poverty: Poverty in relation to the standards of the society in which someone lives; poverty where basic needs can't be accessed

social justice: Promoting a fair society by challenging injustice and valuing diversity. Ensuring that everyone has equal access to provisions, opportunities and rights.

5. Contexts

- The Racial and Religious Hatred Act and the Equality Act are intended to **stop discrimination**. However, some say that these acts can make it illegal for someone to air their views about race, gender, belief and more. They say this is **ensorship**...
- Even after the American Civil War (April 1861- May 1865), which was caused by disagreements over slavery, many of the southern states passed laws which kept white and non-white people apart. These laws (nicknamed **Jim Crow laws**) were repealed in 1964.
- Since 2010, The **World Giving Index** has ranked countries according to how charitable their populations are. People are asked about helping strangers, donating money and volunteering. UK has fallen outside the top 10 only once.