



Lesson Plan: Looking at Human Rights Abuses Around the World

OVERVIEW

This lesson plan is designed to be used with the film, *The Judge and the General*, the story of the criminal investigation of General Augusto Pinochet, who led a military regime in Chile for 17 years. The film features Judge Juan Guzmán, who led the investigation. Previously, Judge Guzmán was unaware of the widespread human rights violations systematically being carried out in his country. Classrooms can use this lesson to learn more about Chilean history, as well as worldwide human rights abuses and what can be done to help stop them.

Note: This film contains disturbing verbal descriptions of torture and criminal activities, images of violence and dead bodies, and sections in Spanish with English subtitles.

P.O.V. documentaries can be recorded off-the-air and used for educational purposes for up to one year from the initial broadcast. In addition, P.O.V. offers a lending library of DVD's and VHS tapes that you can borrow anytime during the school year — FOR FREE!

Please visit our Film Library at http://www.amdoc.org/outreach_filmlibrary.php to find other films suitable for classroom use or to make this film a part of your school's permanent collection.

OBJECTIVES

By the end of this lesson, students will:

- Use viewing skills and note taking strategies to understand and interpret a video clip.
- Work with a partner to identify the key concepts of an essay.
- Research and present a news story about an area of the world where human rights are being abused.
- Identify what they can do to help stop human rights violations.

GRADE LEVELS

9-12

SUBJECTS

World History, Geography, U.S. History, Current Events, Civics

MATERIALS NEEDED

- Method (varies by school) of showing the class an online video clip
- Computers with access to the Internet
- A world map
- Stickers to mark countries on the map

ESTIMATED TIME OF COMPLETION

Two 50-minute class periods

SUGGESTED CLIP

Recognizing and Standing Up to Injustice (length 6:22)

The clip begins at 42:57 with the quote “Families of the ‘disappeared’ organize...” and ends at 49:19 with the quote “...they will be killed themselves.”

BACKGROUND

Many Chileans refer to “the other 9/11” — the September 11, 1973 coup led by General Augusto Pinochet against the democratically elected government of Socialist Salvador Allende. The coup left thousands of Chileans dead, tortured or “disappeared.” Allende committed suicide. The ensuing 17-year dictatorship was embraced then, and even now, by a large segment of Chilean society.

Pinochet was sole ruler of Chile until 1990, when he stepped down as president but retained power as army commander until 1998. At that point, Pinochet assumed the title, “Senator for Life,” which gave him parliamentary immunity from prosecution in Chile. The same year, relatives of victims filed a criminal complaint against Pinochet, but no one expected anything to happen – an expectation reinforced when the case was assigned by lottery to appellate court judge Juan Guzmán. (For human rights cases in Chile, judges are responsible for investigating and prosecuting, as well as trying, cases.)

Guzmán was seen as a conservative judge who, as a young law clerk, had penned some of the denials of habeas corpus, which were signed by higher judges. A man from a wealthy family, Guzmán believed the Pinochet version of events: that the army had saved the country from a Communist revolution and that any excesses committed by the military were the inevitable consequences of a dire struggle. Then the unexpected happened — Judge Guzmán began investigating the allegations in detail and in earnest.

In 1998, General Pinochet was arrested in Britain while undergoing medical treatment. Initially, a Spanish court requested his extradition for human rights violations and the British government placed him under house arrest. Doctors deemed Pinochet too ill to stand trial, and he stayed in Britain until 2000, when he was flown back to Chile. His immunity was taken away, and in 2006, several judges indicted Pinochet and high courts ruled him mentally competent to stand trial. He was placed under house arrest and waiting trial on multiple counts of fraud, torture and murder until his death on December 10, 2006. For more details on the history of Pinochet’s rule in Chile, see Background on Chile and Pinochet in the P.O.V. Facilitator’s Guide.

ACTIVITY

Day One

1. Display the world map at the front of the room. Put a sticker on the map to show the location of Chile. Drawing from the Background section in this lesson plan, briefly outline for students how Pinochet came to power and what human rights abuses took place during his regime.
2. Tell the class that in 1998, the first criminal complaints against Pinochet were presented to the courts and assigned to Judge Juan Guzmán. Explain that in Chile, judges also investigate and try human rights cases. At first, Judge Guzmán was

skeptical that the government was involved in such criminal activities, but as he gathered more and more evidence, he learned the truth and realized that he had been living in what he described as a “golden bubble,” where he was insulated from the suffering of his countrymen. Earlier in his career, Guzmán had even written rejections, which were signed by higher judges, to families who had submitted writs of habeas corpus to the courts to seek relief from unlawful imprisonment for their loved ones.

3. Show the class the short video clip, Recognizing and Standing Up to Injustice. Ask students to take notes on what actions were being taken to address the government’s human rights abuses. Explain that the man featured in the clip is Judge Guzmán, who conducted the investigation into Pinochet’s regime.
4. Ask students why they think some people in the video, such as those at the Viscariate of Solidarity, felt compelled to act in the face of injustice, while others didn’t seem to recognize what was happening, such as Judge Guzmán earlier in his career. Tell the class that Pinochet was ultimately indicted, along with other members of his security forces, but Pinochet died in 2006 before he was brought to trial. Investigations continue.
5. Divide students into pairs and ask them to read the essay by Carol Tavris on the P.O.V. website. Have the students in each pair write an outline that addresses the key concepts of the essay, answering questions such as, “If you had to explain this essay to someone who hasn’t read it, what are the main points that you would want him or her to understand?” Then, ask students to note their own ideas for why people might not act when the human rights of others are being violated.
6. For homework, ask students to find a news story that talks about human rights abuses and bring it to class the next day. In addition to using regular news outlets for their research, students can find information on human rights issues at the websites for human rights organizations listed in the Resources section.

Day Two

1. Have students take turns going to the front of the class and summarizing their news stories. Ask them to put a sticker on the world map to show where the human rights violations in their news reports are taking place.
2. After the student presentations, take a look at the world map with its collection of stickers showing the locations of human rights abuses. Discuss why such activities might be allowed to go on in these places. Ask students what they can do to bring awareness to these abuses. Responses might include writing letters to elected representatives, writing letters to the editor, creating a piece of protest art or plan a local event to help raise awareness of these abuses, signing petitions, asking large companies to use their influence on governments that violate human rights, donating to human rights organizations, etc. (The websites for human rights organizations in the Resources section provide additional ideas.)
3. Close the activity by inviting students to set at least one goal for taking action against the types of human rights abuses they learned about in their classmates’ presentations.

ASSESSMENT SUGGESTIONS

Students can be assessed on:

- Reading comprehension notes from the essay activity.
- Completion of the homework assignment.
- Participation in the presentation of news reports.
- Contributions to class discussions.

EXTENSIONS & ADAPTATIONS

- Extend the scope of the student presentations in the main activity by asking the class to present examples of historical human rights violations. Create a timeline of these abuses and discuss any patterns that students observe.
- Give extra credit to students who bring in news reports about the ongoing investigations and judicial proceedings of agents from Pinochet's government who have been indicted for criminal activities. Post these stories in a "Monitoring Justice" type of display in your classroom.
- Watch the P.O.V. film, *The Fall of Fujimori* (<http://www.pbs.org/pov/pov2006/falloffujimori/index.html>) and learn about one of the former leaders of Peru, a neighboring country to Chile. Alberto Fujimori rose from obscurity to become the president of Peru in 1990. During his ten years in office, he assumed dictatorial powers and waged a successful war on terror, but was forced to resign amid accusations of human rights abuses and corruption. After living for a time in exile, Fujimori was arrested and returned to Peru to face criminal charges. Then, watch *The Judge and the General* in its entirety and have students write essays that compare and contrast the histories of Fujimori and Pinochet.
- Explore the geography of Chile by reading the first ten pages of *My Invented Country* by Isabel Allende, the niece of former Chilean President Salvador Allende. Discuss her use of imagery as she provides details on four regions of Chile. Draw or paint the scenes that she describes. Discuss Allende's belief that the geography of Chile has affected the country's national character. How might it have contributed to divisions among Chileans?
- Study the Human Rights Watch resources on U.S. Torture and Abuse of Detainees (<http://www.hrw.org/campaigns/torture.htm>). Then, debate the question: "Is the U.S. justified in using "enhanced interrogation techniques" to secure information that would prevent a terrorist attack?" Wrap up the activity by discussing how the U.S.'s treatment of detainees might affect its standing in the world.
- Conduct a document analysis of CIA Activities in Chile (<http://www.qwu.edu/~nsarchiv/news/20000919/index.html#docs>), a 21-page declassified report that outlines the CIA's actions in Chile leading up to the 1973 coup and the agency's involvement with the Pinochet regime afterwards. List the strategies used by the CIA to accomplish its goals. What is the historical context of these activities? What were the benefits and consequences? Have students evaluate in writing whether the CIA's activities in Chile were appropriate measures for protecting U.S. national security interests. Keep in mind the quote in the film from President Nixon, "An Italian businessman came to call on me in

the Oval Office, and he said, 'If Allende should win the election in Chile and then you have Castro in Cuba, what you will in effect have in Latin America is a red sandwich, and eventually it will all be red.' And that's what we had felt."

RESOURCES

Amnesty International USA

<http://www.amnestyusa.org/index.html>

The website for this human rights organization provides news about abuses happening around the world and numerous ideas for what people can do to help stop these activities.

Augusto Pinochet, Dictator Who Ruled by Terror, Dies at 91

<http://www.nytimes.com/2006/12/11/world/americas/11pinochet.html>

This *New York Times* article provides details on Pinochet's life and his brutal regime.

Former Chilean Dictator Pinochet Dies

http://www.pbs.org/newshour/extra/features/july-dec06/pinochet_12-11.html

The article from *NewsHour EXTRA* is written for a student audience and provides details of Pinochet's administration.

Global Youth Connect

<http://www.globalyouthconnect.org>

This organization focuses on how youth can promote and protect human rights around the world. The Web site provides news information on human rights abuses and details about how to get involved with the organization.

Human Rights Watch

<http://www.hrw.org>

This website provides news, photo galleries, and other information about human rights violations worldwide. There is also a "Take Action" section with ideas for how to get involved.

Witness

<http://www.witness.org>

This website shows how to "use video and online technologies to open the eyes of the world to human rights violations."

STANDARDS

These standards are drawn from "Content Knowledge," a compilation of content standards and benchmarks for K-12 curriculum by McRel (Mid-continent Research for Education and Learning) at <http://www.mcrel.org/standards-benchmarks/>.

Civics

Standard 22: Understands how the world is organized politically into nation-states, how nation-states interact with one another, and issues surrounding U.S. foreign policy.

Geography

Standard 2: Knows the location of places, geographic features, and patterns of the environment.

Standard 10: Understands the nature and complexity of Earth's cultural mosaics.

Standard 13: Understands the forces of cooperation and conflict that shape the divisions of Earth's surface.

Language Arts

Standard 9: Uses viewing skills and strategies to understand and interpret visual media.

U.S. History

Standard 30: Understands developments in foreign policy and domestic politics between the Nixon and Clinton presidencies.

World History

Standard 44: Understands the search for community, stability, and peace in an interdependent world.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Cari Ladd, M.Ed., is an educational writer with a background in broadcast journalism, secondary education, and media development. Previously, she served as PBS Interactive's Director of Education, overseeing the development of curricular resources tied to PBS programs, the PBS TeacherSource Web site (now PBS Teachers), and online teacher professional development services. She has also taught in Maryland and Northern Virginia.

Background Sources

"Augusto Pinochet, Dictator Who Ruled by Terror, Dies at 91," *The New York Times*, December 11, 2006; *The Judge and the General* by Elizabeth Farnsworth and Patricio Lanfranco.