

Mrs. Roosevelt Said This About Human Rights



“Where, after all, do universal human rights begin? In small places, close to home—so close and so small that they cannot be seen on any maps of the world. Yet they are the world of the individual person; the neighborhood he lives in; the school or college he attends; the factory, farm, or office where he works. Such are the places where every man, woman, and child seeks equal justice, equal opportunity, equal dignity without discrimination. Unless these rights have meaning there, they have little meaning anywhere. Without concerted citizen action to uphold them close to home, we shall look in vain for progress in the larger world.”

Vocabulary:

article: a section of a document that deals with a particular point. Example: There are 30 *articles* in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

citizen: a person who has a right to live in a country because he was born there or because he has been accepted with full rights in that country. Example: I am a *citizen* of France.



concerted: planned or done by two or more people working together or with the same goal. Example: The team won through the *concerted* efforts of all team members.

dignity: a proper sense of pride and respect. Example: Their mother kept her *dignity* despite being very poor.

discrimination: an unfair difference in treatment; denying equal rights to certain groups of people. Example: That company hires people without *discrimination*; they hire based on ability.

equal: having the same status, rights or opportunities as another or others. Example: Both the girls have an *equal* chance to enter the tennis competition.

in vain: without success, not accomplishing what is intended. Example: He searched for his shoe *in vain*.

justice: being fair and right, especially in the way decisions are made in applying rules or the law. Example: The man asked for *justice* when lies were printed about him in the paper.

opportunity: a good chance; a situation that will help achieve a goal or desire. Example: The boy has an *opportunity* to learn how to play football.

seek: to try to find or achieve something. Example: She *seeks* a faster way to wash the clothes.

Student challenge:

Memorize the first two sentences of the above quote, “Where, after all, do universal human rights begin? In small places, close to home—so close and so small that they cannot be seen on any maps of the world.” Say these sentences to another student until you know them perfectly.