

# Unit 5



## Applying New Knowledge of the UN

### Teacher Primer #5

The United Nations holds special conferences focusing on a certain issue that give Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) and other agencies of the UN a chance to voice their opinions and findings. At each of these conferences, speakers discuss pressing issues and situations. They can create a formal plan of action or a set of priorities. It is then up to individual governments to put these plans into action in their own countries.<sup>1</sup> Some such conferences have been the UN Conference on the Environment in Stockholm (1972), the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (1989), the Fourth World Conference on Women (Beijing, 1995), the Habitat II Conference (1996), and the Kyoto Protocol (1997). One of the more recent conferences was the 2000 World Summit. At this conference 189 Member States agreed to the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). The eight goals expected to be accomplished by 2015 are listed below:

1. Eradicate extreme poverty and hunger.
2. Achieve universal primary education.
3. Promote gender equality and empower women.
4. Reduce child mortality.
5. Improve maternal health.
6. Combat HIV/AIDS, malaria, and other diseases.
7. Ensure environmental sustainability.
8. Develop a global partnership for development.

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1. Intermediate School Kit on the United Nations. (New York: United Nations, 1995) 13.

## Unit 5: Applying New Knowledge of the United Nations

**Goal:** This unit is an opportunity for students to use role-playing to review what they have already learned. Students should also get a better sense of how the UN works from this lesson. Finally, they will get the chance to apply what they have learned to a class project.

### Activity 1 (20 minutes)

#### General Assembly

##### Read the Introduction below and then choose either version 1 or version 2

Review the fact that the General Assembly is one of the 6 main parts of the United Nations. The General Assembly is a meeting of the major organs of the United Nations that takes place every year. It starts in September and lasts for about 3 months. Tell students that they are going to take part in a (much shorter) mock General Assembly.<sup>2</sup>

The United Nations Headquarters, where the General Assembly meets, is located in the United States in New York City. However, the land that the UN is built on is not part of the United States. It is international territory and belongs to all the countries of the United Nations.

The students should picture themselves on international territory at the General Assembly building. They are in a large meeting room, about to begin.

Have students represent the country they chose for the homework from Unit 2. (If two students chose the same country, they can work together.)

#### Version 1 -

*You will need* - 1 copy of I Dream of Peace put out by UNICEF. It is available for \$9.79 (at the time of this publication) in the children's section at most bookstores. You may also be able to find it in a local library. (The UU-UNO recommends this book for your RE library.)

Explain to the class that the book you are about to show them is a collection of drawings created by children who have lived through war. Show several of the pictures, reading the descriptions and asking students what they think about each one. We suggest pages 23, 33, 39, 41, 52, 59, and 64. How does the child who made the drawing feel? What do you think it would be like to live that child's life? Are these children's rights being violated?

Then ask the class to talk about what they would do to try and help these children. Remind them that they are representing certain countries and that they should try to think about what that country would be most worried about. Make a list of the students' ideas and suggestions on the board.

#### Version 2 -

Ask students to brainstorm issues with which the United Nations is concerned. What issues do they think their countries (from the Flag Bearing activity) would be concerned

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2. Hope For Tomorrow. (New York: UN Department of Public Information. 1985).

with? Poverty? Immunizations? Environment? Peace? What have we talked about in the past 4 weeks? What issues does the UN deal with? What is something new that you learned about the UN?

(You can use the human barometer game from Unit 2 if it is difficult to get the conversation started.)

## Activity 2 (30 minutes)

### Class Project

#### Option 1 – UN Chalice

*You will need* - Paper and Crayons

- Appendices 2 and 3 (from Unit 1)

Ask students to think about the issues they just discussed in the General Assembly. Paste the chalice and the United Nations symbol somewhere in the front of the room. Tell students that they will be making their own symbols that show some of the things that the UN does. Students should pick an issue they are interested in and then draw a chalice that has a design that focuses on that issue. For example, if someone is really interested in children's rights, he or she could make a chalice with drawings of children on it. (You may want to make some photocopies of the chalice from Appendix 3 so that students draw their designs on top of it. Students can also make their own designs that depict an issue that interests them without using the chalice theme.)

If there is time, students should share their creations with the rest of the class.

#### Option 2 – Stickers

*You will need* - Paper cut into wide rectangular strips (bumper sticker size)

- Crayons and markers

Ask students to think about the issues they just discussed in the General Assembly. Tell them to pick an issue that particularly concerns them (for example: the environment, education, children's rights.) Ask students to design a sticker that would encourage people to get involved in that issue. Students do not need to think of a slogan. They can draw pictures if they would prefer.

Students should share their designs with the class if there is time. They can put their stickers on their car bumper, on a refrigerator, on a window, or on anything they want!

#### Option 3 – Paper Doll Mural



*You will need* - Paper, crayons, and markers

- Several chains of paper dolls (See next page for directions on how to make them); Appendix 13

Ask students to think about the issues they just discussed in the General Assembly. Have them pick an issue in which they are interested and show what they would do to eliminate the problem. For example, a child interested in children's rights could draw a picture of a group of children working together.

The students should share their drawings, explaining what issue they thought about in creating the picture. The drawings should be pasted next to each other on available wall space. Then have the children connect pictures that focus on the same issue by pasting a chain of paper dolls to run between them.

*To make paper dolls* - Cut out the figure from Appendix 13 and trace it onto a piece of paper folded over as if you were making a paper fan. (An 8 ½" by 11" piece of paper can be folded about three times the long way in order for this pattern to work.) It is important that the arms and legs of the figure reach the edge of the folded paper. (This is so that the cutouts will be connected when you unfold the paper.) Unfold the paper to reveal a chain of paper dolls.

### **Activity 3 (10 minutes)**

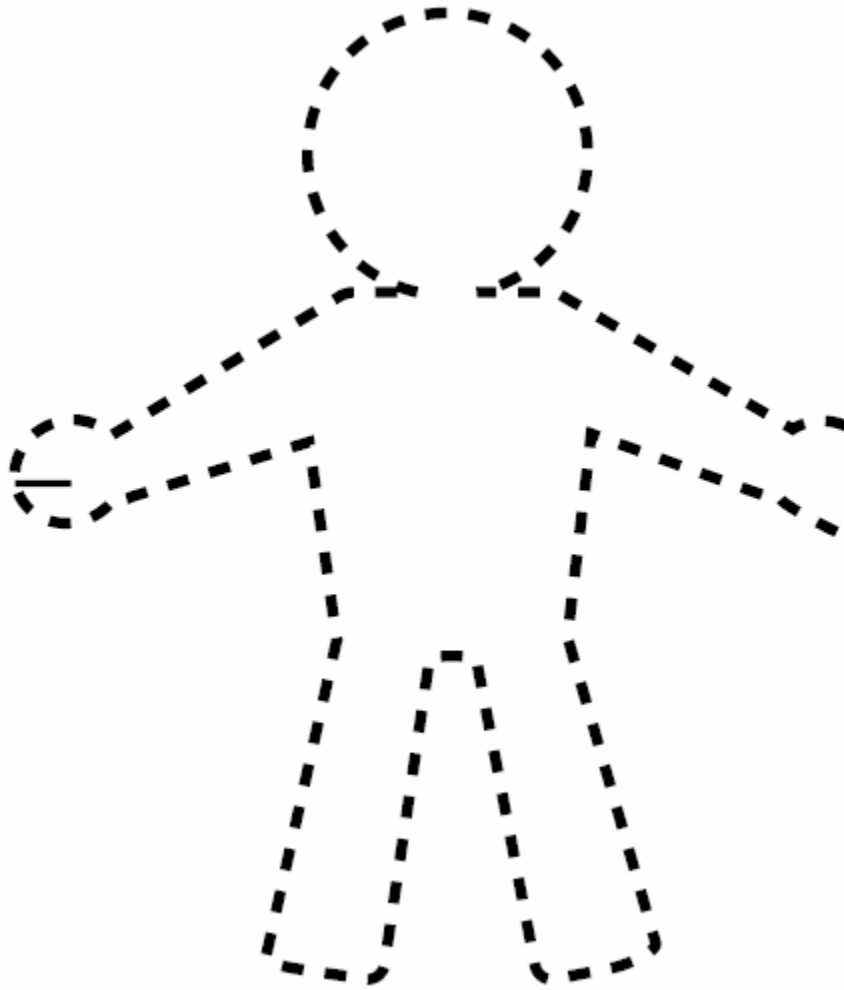
#### **Personal Charters**

*You will need* - Copies of Appendix 15 for each student

Pass out the papers to each student. Ask them to think about what they learned and think about what they can do to be a part of the United Nations effort. Tell them to make their own personal Charter, like the United Nations Charter discussed in the last unit. The personal Charter should be one thing that you decide to do in order to be involved in global issues.

Pass out the homework sheet.

# Paper Doll Pattern



**Appendix 15**

# Personal Charter

So now that you know a little bit about this United Nations stuff, it's up to you to figure out what you think of it. Does it make sense? Are you interested in what you learned about?

Remember the United Nations Charter that listed the goals of the United Nations? Now, it's your turn to make your own charter! What are your goals? Do you want to be involved in world issues?

Maybe you want to do something small like read the newspaper a couple of times a week. Maybe you want to volunteer somewhere in the community. Maybe you're not convinced just yet by this whole United Nations thing and want to know more. Maybe you're just not ready to promise anything right now – that's cool too. Just write down what you are thinking on this piece of paper.

My thoughts on the United Nations:

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My thoughts on getting involved in the community:

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My thoughts on being a Unitarian Universalist:

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This is what I pledge to do:

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