



**ROBERT F.
KENNEDY
HUMAN
RIGHTS**

SPEAK TRUTH TO POWER

**HUMAN RIGHTS
DEFENDERS WHO
ARE CHANGING
OUR WORLD**

KATERYNA YUSHCHENKO

KATERYNA YUSHCHENKO



2022 SPEAKER SERIES: KATERYNA YUSHCHENKO

UNIVERSAL DECLARATION OF HUMAN RIGHTS

ARTICLE 19: Everyone has the right to freedom of opinion and expression; this right includes freedom to hold opinions without interference and to seek, receive and impart information and ideas through any media and regardless of frontiers.

TIME REQUIREMENT

- 60 minutes (pre-teaching)
- 60 minutes (live webinar)

*Alternatively, you can use excerpts from the recorded webinar in class as time allows

GUIDING QUESTIONS

- Who is Kateryna Yushchenko?
- What led to the current war in Ukraine?
- What strategies are used to spread misinformation online?
- What are specific ways to identify and combat misinformation?
- Extension Question: Compare and contrast Kateryna's [February 2022 webinar](#), recorded just before the invasion of Ukraine, with her November 2022 webinar.

OBJECTIVES

By the end of the lesson, students will:

- Know who Kateryna Yushchenko is and understand the work she is doing to speak out for the Ukrainian people
- Understand the current situation in the Ukraine
- Identify key misinformation strategies
- Articulate ways to combat misinformation

VOCABULARY

- Misinformation
- Disinformation

TECHNOLOGY REQUIRED

- Internet access

LESSON PLAN

1. Because the war in Ukraine has been a prominent topic in the news, many students are likely at least partially familiar with what is happening there. To assess what students already know:

- Ask students to write down two things they know about the war in Ukraine. Students may take turns writing this on the board or at writing stations.
- Then, ask students to write down one thing they want to know.

Use this as a starting point for filling in the gaps about what is happening in the Ukraine.

Extension: If students need more information about the conflict, consider starting with this brief overview of background and context for the war prepared by The New York Times. Several other lessons are available in the Additional Resources section.

2. As several media sources have reported, many students are likely getting information about the war from TikTok which has been plagued with disinformation and misinformation. This exercise will help students to identify, analyze, research, and reflect on the news they are seeing.

- First, ask students to choose one news artifact from social media (link to a full article, podcast or video, photo, fact, map, quote, graphic, statistic, social media post, meme, etc.) about the war that stands out to them for any reason.
- Once they have chosen an artifact, invite them to write about why it got their attention.
- Next, ask students to research the veracity of this news artifact using the SIFT method (Stop. Investigate. Find. Trace.) Is this information verifiable? Does the information in it come from a trusted source? What is the purpose of the author?
- Finally, ask students to reflect on why the artifact was effective whether or not it was true. Class discussion - What is our responsibility as social media users when we like or post news?

Modification: Students can share or find news artifacts in a group and choose one to research together.

3. The following exercise will familiarize students with the November 2022 webinar speaker: Kateryna Yushchenko, former First Lady of the Ukraine.

- Building on the media literacy exercise above, tell students that they will be making a social media post about Kateryna Yushchenko to advertise the upcoming webinar. To prepare for this post, students should research more about Kateryna's life and her current writing about the war in Ukraine using only reliable sources. When preparing their post, they should think about their purpose, intended audience, and the format they want to use. Students may work in small groups or individually.
- After they develop their post, ask students to write a brief reflection explaining how they chose what information to include in their post, how they knew the information was reliable, and why they chose the format that they did (TikTok video, meme, Twitter post, graphic, etc.).
- Invite student volunteers to share their posts with the class. To encourage class discussion, ask students to share whether or not they would have clicked on the post and why.

Alternative & Extension: In February of 2022, Kateryna spoke with RFKHR about the potential invasion of Ukraine, but said she remained hopeful that war would be averted. Invite students to view this webinar (or a segment of it) and to create a social media post about it. Use the same reflection and discussion activities outlined above. If you choose this alternative, you could extend the activity by asking students to compare and contrast the February 2022 webinar with the November 2022 webinar after they view it.

4. In preparation for the webinar, each student will prepare one question to ask Kateryna Yushchenko during the webinar. Students will be able to ask questions during the live webinar using the chat feature in the webinar portal. If you are not able to attend the live webinar, you can send questions to us via email.

5. Students will then choose one of the activities listed below that build upon what they learned. Please be sure to share student work with us so that we can post it on the website and share with Kateryna.

STUDENT ACTIVITIES

CHOICE 1

- Because of the war, many cities have seen an influx of refugees from the Ukraine. Students can research what services are currently being provided for Ukrainian refugees (or any refugees) in their community. Then, as a class or as individuals, they can brainstorm ideas for ways to help. Ideas include hosting a dinner for newcomers and members of the community to learn more about one another's cultures and help people feel more at home; asking newcomers what they most need and helping to connect them with community members and resources; or setting up conversation cafes where newcomers can practice English/teach their language with other students or community members.
- When students finish, they will answer the following questions:
- What is one thing you learned from this action?
- In what way did this action promote empathy, resilience, or compassion at your school or in your community?
- After the students have taken action, they can submit a summary or video of what they did here and/or write a letter to Kateryna about what they learned from the project. We will forward any submissions to Kateryna. Please note that any submissions may be reproduced on our website.

CHOICE 2

- Students can choose one issue they think is important in their community. They can then develop responsible social media posts to raise awareness about and encourage action on this issue.
- When students finish, they will answer the following questions:
- What is one thing you learned from this exercise?
- In what ways does responsible social media use promote empathy, resilience, or compassion at your school or in your community?
- After the group has finished, they can submit their posts or reflections here. We will forward them to Kateryna. Please note that any submissions may be reproduced on our website.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- With a partner, each person has one minute to share an experience in which he or she experienced or witnessed harm that is not inline with what we have discussed including the Sustainable Development Goals.
- Spend two minutes writing about your experience sharing this with your partner.
- As a group, discuss your responses to the activity (summarize with the need for empathy and understanding: When we work on violence, no one can throw the first stone.)
- Who or what organization in our community and school is working on peace? (Allies and advocates.)
- How are they working to fulfill the Sustainable Development Goals?
- As a group, brainstorm solutions to violence that align with the Sustainable Development Goals.

CULMINATING ACTIVITY

- Group students in action plan committees where they will identify a need, research solutions, collaborate on a report, and then present it to the class.
- Develop an action plan for committees.
- Goal: To create structures within the campus/community that incorporate youth input in policy-making and budget deliberations.
- The committees will use a six-step process to arrive at its action plan:
 - Examine the community.
 - Choose one to three issues related to the Sustainable Development Goal targets to focus on (root cause analysis).
 - Research the issue(s) and set a goal.
 - Analyze power (primary targets, secondary targets, allies, opposition).
 - Develop strategies and action plans
 - Present to the class the steps to implement your action plan

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

[February 2021 RFKHR STTP Webinar with Kateryna Yushchenko](#) - This webinar was hosted shortly before the invasion of Ukraine

[Classroom Resources for Teaching About the War in Ukraine](#) - List of standards aligned activities and resources compiled by the Illinois Civics Hub

[Combating Disinformation About the War in Ukraine](#) - Articles, activities, apps, and action steps for identifying and resisting misinformation on the internet

[New York Times - Teaching Resources to Help Students Make Sense of the War in Ukraine](#) Articles, maps, photos, videos, podcasts and more, as well as suggestions for using them in your classroom.

[Misinformation Amplification Analysis and Tracking Dashboard](#) - Explains strategies used in misinformation campaigns and why they are effective; it also links to a tracking dashboard that charts how misinformation is amplified on different platforms.

[Teaching News Literacy in the Midst of Unfolding Crises - Applying the SIFT method](#) - Best practices for teaching media literacy specifically around the war in Ukraine with helpful graphics and specific examples

Webinar Time: November 16, 2022; 10:30 EST