



**ROBERT F.  
KENNEDY  
HUMAN  
RIGHTS**

# **SPEAK TRUTH TO POWER**

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

**DR. ANTHONY FAUCI AND DR. TEDROS ADHANOM  
GHEBREYESUS: RIGHTS AT RISK IN A PUBLIC  
HEALTH CRISIS**



# TEDROS ADHANOM GHEBREYESUS

(HE/HIM/HIS)

Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus is an Ethiopian biologist and public health official for whom all roads lead to universal health coverage. The first African to serve as director-general of the World Health Organization.

Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus was born in 1965 in the Ethiopian city of Asmara (now in Eritrea). He graduated from the University of Asmara in biology, earned a master's in immunology of infectious diseases from the University of London, and a Ph.D. in community health from the University of Nottingham. He returned to Ethiopia to support the delivery of health services as a field-level malariologist, a regional health service leader, and later by serving for over a decade as minister of health and then minister of foreign affairs. Under his leadership, he elevated health as a political issue nationally, regionally, and globally, and expanded Ethiopia's health infrastructure and workforce.

In May 2017, Tedros was elected World Health Organization (WHO) director-general—the first African to head the world's leading public health agency. After taking office, he outlined five key priorities: universal health coverage; health emergencies; women's, children's, and adolescents' health; health impacts of climate and environmental change; and a transformed WHO.



# ANTHONY FAUCI

(HE/HIM/HIS)

Born in Brooklyn, New York, in 1940, Anthony Fauci worked in the family drugstore, attended Catholic schools, and graduated from Cornell University Medical College in 1966. In 1968, he joined the National Institutes of Health in the Laboratory of Clinical Investigation, part of the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases (NIAID).

Dr. Fauci was appointed director of NIAID in 1984. He has overseen research to prevent, diagnose, and treat infectious diseases such as HIV/AIDS, tuberculosis, and malaria, as well as autoimmune disorders, asthma, and allergies. Within 20 years of taking the reins of NIAID, Fauci had secured a thousandfold increase in the institute's funding. He received the National Medal of Science in 2005 and the Presidential Medal of Freedom in 2007.

He is undoubtedly best known for standing on the front line of the fight against the novel coronavirus COVID-19. In 2020, he took the lead in mobilizing American science to confront the deadly threat. Despite partisan debate, Fauci stood his ground and remained in his post throughout the administration of President Donald Trump. Anthony Fauci continues to serve as director of NIAID and chief medical adviser to President Joe Biden. He is among the most highly cited medical researchers of all time.

# RIGHTS AT RISK IN A PUBLIC HEALTH CRISIS

## LESSON GRADE LEVELS 9 TO 12, ELA AND SOCIAL STUDIES COURSES

**HEALTH, ADEQUATE STANDARD OF LIVING, SOCIAL SECURITY, EDUCATION, AND PERSONAL DUTY AND RESPONSIBILITY.**

### UNIVERSAL DECLARATION OF HUMAN RIGHTS

- **ARTICLE 19:** Right to freedom of opinion and expression.
- **ARTICLE 22:** Right to social security.
- **ARTICLE 25:** Right to a standard of living adequate for their health and well-being.
- **ARTICLE 26:** Right to education.

### TIME REQUIREMENT

One to five 30-minute lessons, with additional time for work beyond the classroom.

### GUIDING QUESTIONS

- What factors need to be present for a health crisis to become a pandemic?
- What role should the government (local, state, national, and international) play in preventing, addressing, and stopping a health crisis?
- How do the interdependent and interrelated characteristics of human rights become evident during a public health crisis?
- What role does the individual play during a health crisis or pandemic?

### OBJECTIVES

By the end of the lesson, students will:

- Know about the various national and international governmental agencies responsible for public health.
- Understand the impact of government and societal action and inaction.
- Recognize leaders in the field of infectious disease.
- Understand the interdependent and interrelated characteristics of human rights.
- Examine the role of social media in a public health crisis.

### CONCEPTS

- Individuals, groups, and institutional social responsibility
- Public health care
- Social connectedness

### STUDENT SKILLS

- Critical thinking and problem solving.
- Comparing and contrasting.
- Researching and analyzing information.
- Drawing inferences and making conclusions.

### VOCABULARY

- Pandemic
- Public health
- Mitigation
- Social distancing
- Virus
- World Health Organization
- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
- Infectious disease
- COVID-19
- Coronavirus disease

### TECHNOLOGY REQUIRED

- Internet access
- Computer access

### MATERIALS

- [Video of Dr. Anthony Fauci](#) testifying before the House Oversight and Reform Committee hearing on coronavirus response, Day 1.
- [News article](#) about Fauci testifying before Congress.
- [Video of the World Health Organization's \(WHO's\) media briefing on COVID-19 with Dr. Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus.](#)
- [WHO Situation Dashboard.](#)

# ANTICIPATORY SET

The following lessons are presented as in-class activities. During the COVID-19 pandemic and other public health crises, we recognize that teachers are likely to engage in virtual or online learning exercises. You can adapt any of the following class activities to be assigned to individuals or groups online with the opportunity for virtual discussion.

During a public health crisis, many rights are at risk. One of these is Article 19 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights: the right to seek, receive, and impart information and ideas through any media and regardless of borders. Because of this, encourage and facilitate the use of trustworthy news sources and other data among students based upon current best practices.

- Divide students into three groups.
- Ask each group to research a public health crisis. Examples include: Ebola virus disease (EVD), H1N1 (swine flu), H5N1 (bird flu), HIV/AIDS, and SARS coronavirus (SARS-CoV).
- Each group of students should answer the following questions:
  - What was the health concern?
  - How did it spread?
  - Did it affect certain populations more than others? (Compare males vs. females, age groups, ethnic groups, etc.)
- How did the government(s) respond to this health concern?
- Ask students to compare and contrast the COVID-19 pandemic with the public health crisis they have researched. If they have not already, ask students to consider the questions they answered for the public health crisis and compare those answers to the circumstances of COVID-19.

# STUDENT ACTIVITIES

## ACTIVITY 1

- Each group should have one sheet of flip-chart paper. The paper should be held lengthwise and divided into four columns, with these headings: Local, State, Federal, and Intergovernmental.
- Students should answer this question: *What are the specific roles and responsibilities of the local, state, federal, and intergovernmental (international) levels of government when it comes to protecting and promoting public health?*
- Students should consider the following in developing their charts:
  - Legislation passed or proposed by the government jurisdiction.
  - The influence of agencies or actors, such as the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS), the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), or elected officials.
  - Public statements and information released by governmental administrations, including press conferences and releases, media briefings, official statements, and social media.
  - The current political and cultural climate.
- Each group should try to reach a consensus. When all the columns have been filled, the charts can be taped in place in the classroom.

- Groups should be allowed time to look at each other’s finished charts and to identify differences in roles and responsibilities (of the government jurisdictions) as perceived by other groups.
- As a class, have the students share their outcomes and respond to the following questions:
  - What (if anything) did all groups agree are the roles and responsibilities of the government (local, state, federal, and intergovernmental) when protecting and promoting public health?
  - Did one group identify a role or responsibility of the government jurisdiction that other groups did not? Discuss.
  - In addition to taking action, what is the responsibility of the government as it pertains to dissemination of information (regarding public health)?

## ACTIVITY 2

- Divide students into two groups.
- One group will watch the video of Dr. Anthony Fauci testifying before the House Oversight and Reform Committee hearing on coronavirus response, Day 1, or read “8 key exchanges from the testimony.”
  - Ask students to discuss their reactions to the testimony. Have students discuss and/or write about how Dr. Fauci perceives the roles and responsibilities of different levels of government as they pertain to the protection and promotion of public health (as evidenced by the testimony and other background research). Ask students how this approach affects the individual.
- The other group will watch the video of the World Health Organization’s (WHO’s) media briefing on COVID-19 with Dr. Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus, or read the transcript.
  - Ask students to discuss their reactions to the briefing. Have students discuss and/or write about how Dr. Tedros perceives the roles and responsibilities of different levels of government as they pertain to the protection and promotion of public health

## TEACHER TIP

The full video will give the broadest perspective on the United States governmental and intergovernmental response to a public health crisis. Adjust viewing time of the testimony and briefing videos for your class needs.

- Dr. Fauci testifying before the House Oversight and Reform Committee hearing on coronavirus response, Day 1.
  - Dr. Fauci’s opening statement on the coronavirus and timeline for vaccines begins at 13:54.
  - Dr. Fauci’s discussion of lack of containment and testing of coronavirus within the United States is at 35:01.
  - Rep. Stephen Lynch (D-Mass.) discusses the response of President Trump to the coronavirus outbreak, and Dr. Fauci replies in regard to the data he has provided at 49:14.
  - Dr. Robert Redfield (CDC) and Dr. Fauci discuss the lack of and possibilities for testing at 58:08.
  - Dr. Fauci says “We need to do a lot more” at the national level and in response to travel restrictions at 1:02:23.
  - Dr. Fauci refutes the comparison between coronavirus and other viruses including the “common flu [and cold]” and warns the committee against inaction and complacency at 1:14:04, at 1:30:11, and at 1:35:58.
  - Dr. Fauci talks about the importance of data and science (when questioned about speaking out in politically charged times) at 1:16:55.
  - Dr. Fauci talks about the necessity for quick response and mitigation strategies by the United States with the coronavirus at 1:47:58 and at 1:51:46.
  - Dr. Fauci responds to questions about what the health sector needs from Congress and the government to address public health concerns at 1:58:36.

(as evidenced by the briefing and other background research). Ask students how this approach affects the individual.

- Ask each group to pick volunteers to summarize the video/information and discussion and report orally to the class.
- As a class, talk about the outcomes of the group discussions. Examine the similarities and differences between the views of Dr. Fauci and Dr. Tedros as they pertain to the government's role in protection and promotion of public health. Students should consider the information Dr. Fauci and Dr. Tedros provided to the national and international community and how governments responded to the information.

---

### ACTIVITY 3

- Group students in pairs.
- Ask each pair to select a country (other than the United States) to focus on for this project.
- Show students the World Health Organization Situation Dashboard.
- Ask students to compare the graphs, speed of spread, and numbers from the United States and their country of choice.
- After they examine the WHO data, ask students to research the public response of their chosen country to local, national, and global coronavirus outbreaks. Have students answer the following questions:
  - What tactics, if any, did your country use to mitigate and control the coronavirus? In what time frame did these actions take place?
  - If applicable, what steps did the local, state (or provincial), federal (or national), and intergovernmental jurisdictions take to address the coronavirus? What information did they or did they not share with their population and when?
  - Did the government response (at any level) align more with the position of Dr. Fauci, Dr. Tedros, or neither? How did they align? How did they differ?

- World Health Organization's (WHO) media briefing on COVID-19 with Dr. Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus.
  - Dr. Tedros speaks about breaking the chains of transmission and the necessity of testing at 2:32.
  - Dr. Tedros discusses the joint call to action of the global business community from the WHO and the International Chamber of Commerce at 10:05.
  - Dr. Tedros speaks of the need for political commitment at all levels of government (including the highest levels) at 17:51.
  - Dr. Tedros promotes "a whole of government and the whole of society approach" to combating coronavirus at 37:49.

- Ask students to compare and contrast the government response of their chosen country to the actions of the United States. Students should explain how the United States' statistics relate to those of the country they studied.
  - To what extent do the countries reveal commonalities (or differences) in the spread of the coronavirus? Can you identify any patterns consistent between the two?
  - Has one of the countries been more successful at controlling the coronavirus? If so, why and how, in your opinion? What has the government's role been?
- Have students report what they've learned about their country to the class.
- As a class, talk about their research sessions. Ask students if it was easy or difficult to find data or information about their countries outside of the WHO statistics.
- Have the students merge all their research into one document, to be titled "Comprehensive Global Coronavirus Response."

## CULMINATING ACTIVITY

- In their pairs, ask students to consider the contexts they have been researching and generate a list of rights that have been protected or denied by the country's government due to their management (or mismanagement) of the coronavirus public health crisis.

### TEACHER TIP

Students may recognize right away that their right to a standard of living adequate for their health and well-being (Article 25) can be affected, protected, or denied during a pandemic or public health crisis. Ask students if any of their interdependent or interrelated rights have been impacted. For example, has the public health crisis resulted in a change in their way of life? If so, what is that change, and how has it protected or denied a right guaranteed to them previously?

- Using the information in the previous activity, have each group write a Rights Action Plan to address these rights within the Comprehensive Global Coronavirus Response document. Students should include at least three government actions that can be taken to protect or promote these rights. Within their plans, students should discuss which level of government will be involved and what actions they will take.
- Students should refer to their charts from Activity 1 and consider how the following could be used in their plans:

- Legislation passed or proposed by the government jurisdiction.
- The influence of agencies or actors, such as the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS), the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), or elected officials.
- Public statements and information released by the governmental administration, including press conferences and releases, media briefings, official statements, and social media.
- The current political and cultural climate.
- Ask students to reflect on the discussion from Activity 1 and consider the responsibility of the government as it pertains to dissemination of information during a public health crisis or pandemic. Students should consider these responsibilities when developing action items for their plans.
- Students should also consider local individuals and human rights defenders in their community who are taking action to protect or promote human rights. If applicable, students should include in their plans actions that could be taken by these or other individuals.
- Ask groups to present their plans to the class either through presentation slides, flip charts, or oral presentations.

## ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

### WORLD HEALTH ORGANIZATION (WHO)

<https://www.who.int/emergencies/diseases/novel-coronavirus-2019>

Live updates, reports, and research about the global outbreak.

### CENTERS FOR DISEASE CONTROL AND PREVENTION (CDC)

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/index.html>

Information regarding symptoms, prevention, and preparation.

# BACKGROUND INFORMATION

The Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) was created in the aftermath of World War II in an effort to ensure that the atrocities committed by Nazi Germany would not be repeated. People representing all regions of the world and a variety of legal traditions and cultural backgrounds came together to codify a list of human rights to which everyone around the globe should be entitled. The drafting committee, known as the UN Commission on Human Rights, was chaired by Eleanor Roosevelt, widow of U.S. President Franklin D. Roosevelt and a longtime advocate on behalf of minorities, refugees, women, and the working class. The final document, containing 30 articles, was recognized as a common standard by the UN General Assembly on December 10, 1948. Since that date, the document has been translated into over 500 languages.

The commission's work did not end with the approval of the declaration. The treaty still needed to be ratified by nations, with the expectation that every nation that signed on "would then be obligated to change its laws wherever they did not conform to the points contained in the covenant." The commission was optimistic that this work could be completed within a few years. However, the challenge was far greater than they realized. Today, advocates continue to fight to secure the human rights of citizens around the globe

## BECOMING A DEFENDER

We are in unprecedented times as the world continues to navigate the spread of COVID-19. What we do know is that human rights should and must be considered in all the efforts to help prevent this from becoming worse. You might be asking, what can we do to help uphold and protect human rights during this challenging time? How can we effect change safely?

We encourage you to organize virtual group meetings where you and your fellow students can brainstorm ways to help during this global challenge. Below are some immediate actions all young people can take!

- Use social media for good! A lot of helpful educational materials are available that suggest ways people can stop the spread of this virus. Make PSAs to share that information. Help educate the public about the need for social distancing, the importance of vaccination, and what your personal duty is to the global community: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/prevention.html>
- Find local food banks that serve vulnerable populations in your immediate community or around the world. Create a PSA to encourage people to donate to them, or create a fundraiser themselves to benefit a local food bank. For example, Feeding America has a large reach, and you can encourage people to donate to it.