

A Bill of Rights For Women in Afghanistan

Subjects: Social Studies

Suggested Grade Levels: 12

Time Frame: 4 classes

Heidi King,
South Philadelphia High School

Overview

By reviewing articles and videos about women’s rights in Afghanistan and reading the novel *A Thousand Splendid Suns* by Khaled Hosseini, students will extend their evaluation of the Bill of Rights in the US Constitution to evaluate global human rights violations and our collective human responsibility to severely oppressed members of another nation and culture. Questions of religious self-determination and human rights will be explored, as well as potential consequences of United States intervention in women’s rights Afghanistan. Students will draw upon previous journal reflections based reading and responding daily to essential questions and discussions of *A Thousand Splendid Suns*.

Connection to Philadelphia World Heritage Tool Kit’s Goal

Students will consider the responsibilities and limits of world human rights advocacy and intervention as they explore Afghanistan in terms of culture, economics, environment, politics, religion and gender.

Core Curriculum Standards

- 8.5.11-12.B: Determine the central ideas or information of a primary or secondary source; provide an accurate summary that makes clear the relationships among the key details and ideas.
- 8.6 11-12 A: Write arguments focused on discipline-specific content.
- 8.5.11-12.H: Evaluate an author’s premises, claims, and evidence by corroborating or challenging them with other information.

Objectives

Students will be able to craft and defend the contents of their team’s “Bill of Rights for Women in Afghanistan” based on team analysis of women’s lives as portrayed in Khaled Hosseini’s novel *A Thousand Splendid Suns* and nonfiction articles and current events about Afghanistan. This is intended to be a culminating assignment on constitutional rights and global human rights advocacy. Students will be able to analyze and evaluate each team’s “Bill of Rights for Women of Afghanistan” from the possible perspectives and points of view of Afghan citizens.

Essential Question

What human rights violations affect women in Afghanistan? What factors need to be considered in advocating for equal rights for women in Afghanistan?

Materials Needed

Khaled Hosseini’s novel *A Thousand Splendid Suns* (optional), large poster size paper for each team, markers, news articles, and videos (links for articles and videos listed under additional resources)

Procedure

Day One: Students in academically heterogeneous teams will read and take notes on the articles and videos provided. Students will share with each other their findings and identify a list of human rights violations.

Day Two: Student teams will write a “Bill of Rights” to address these human rights violations. They will each choose a different character from *A Thousand Splendid Suns* and write a ½ page response to the proposed Bill of Rights from the perspective of that character. If the class has not read the novel, students can choose to write from the perspective of one of the following: an Imam, a Taliban member, a young woman raised by parents who support her education, a man with 3 wives, a woman married to a man with 2 other wives, or the owner of a jail filled with women who were convicted of crimes in a society where women do not have equal rights.

Day Three: Student teams present their Bill of Rights and have fishbowl discussion as if they are the characters from *A Thousand Splendid Suns* or the people listed above. Class votes on various amendments to be included in the class “Bill of Rights for Afghan Women” following discussion.

Day Four: Teams meet to consider and evaluate obstacles to establishing a “Bill of Rights for Women.” Groups share out and formulate proposals to negotiate with those who may oppose their newly crafted Bill of Rights.

Outcome/Assessment

Teacher will have team/individual conferences throughout the four-day lesson. Rubric for engagement expectations may be created.

Special Education and English Language Learners Accommodations

Videos/images provided, conferencing, collaborative writing

Additional Resources

Web:

<http://jama.jamanetwork.com/article.aspx?articleid=187827>

<http://hir.harvard.edu/archives/8337> (An abstract or quick review of the article listed above)

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2X2hGQ7V_Ro (Video showing interviews with women about abuse)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sfHpDtpEmOI>

<http://www.theguardian.com/world/2012/mar/28/afghan-women-jailed-moral-crimes>