WASTELAND Essay Prompts

OPTION 1: In what way are the obstacles that women in your community face similar to or different from the obstacles faced by the women at the Jardim Gramacho landfill? Using Student Handout B: Postscreening Activity Worksheet for reference, describe how you would work to improve circumstances for women in your community, using the following questions to guide your essay

What would your goals be? o What steps would you take to effect change?

Who would you work with to accomplish these goals?

 What organizations are addressing these issues in your community and how would you collaborate with them?

 What are the opportunities and resources available to you?

 What obstacles would you face and what strategies would you use to overcome them?

 How would your community change if you were successful in your efforts?

 What would the outcome look like?

OPTION 2: Until they are enacted and enforced, human rights are just words on a page. Read the following quote by Eleanor Roosevelt, who played a crucial role in developing and championing the UDHR. Describe what the quote means in your own words and respond to the questions below:

“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.” – Eleanor Roosevelt o

Discuss: • Who is responsible for protecting the rights and dignity of individuals?

• What does Roosevelt mean by “Without concerted citizen action to uphold them close to home, we shall look in vain for progress in the larger world”?

How can our individual actions have a global impact? •

How did the individual actions of the people depicted in Waste Land give “meaning” to the rights listed in the UDHR?

• In the quote Eleanor Roosevelt says that human rights begin “in small places, close to home.” What actions can we take every day to preserve the rights and dignity of people in our families, our schools, and our communities?

Option 3

Write an essay exploring the many environmental and health hazards present in landfills.

Where are the major open air landfills in the world today?

What can be done to clean up these areas?

What companies or governments are leading in this area?