Human rights are important as they are a person’s basic rights to live a life free from violence and persecution. They are a person’s right to live a life where they are safe and have access to education, food, shelter and are treated equally. It should be said that in today’s society, which too often sees war, violence and exploitation between countries, races, and cultures, human rights are not only important, but necessary to maintain the dignity and worth of human beings.

Human rights are important to maintain law and order on a global scale, to bring to justice those individuals or groups who violate the rights of others, and, to use the words of Martin Luther King, uphold the basic fact that “all men are created equal”. Human rights are so important that the United Nations strive to ensure that they are upheld and respected and go to great lengths to do so, including peace keeping forces in war torn countries and humanitarian aid to refugees.

In the beginning, the only people who had rights were the ones that were in the right group, but then Cyrus the Great decided that other people should have some rights too, forging an idea that has taken hundreds of years to complete. But it was well worth it. King John, was the King of England who signed the Magna Carta, and that made it official. It took two world wars and numerous fights and vicious outbreaks to finally show everyone how important human rights were.

The Universal Declaration of Human Rights, which is the document that the United Nations strive to uphold, states that every human being has the same rights, those rights being the rights of humans everywhere, simply because you’re human. Human rights are the basic rights that humans have, something that we are all entitled to. Human rights range from the right to privacy to the right to trial. Human rights are important to many people, and most abide by them.

To maintain law and order, human rights are the framework that spells out how we treat our fellow man. Without the framework of human rights, the world would descend into anarchy and only the biggest and strongest would be able to set the rules. Human rights are a way to bring to justice a group or individual who use power and injustice to dominate another.

Adolf Hitler, who was responsible for the deaths of thousands of Jewish people during WWII is an example of someone who violated the human rights of others. Hitler’s
actions and his domination and destruction of the Jews shocked the world and following WWII, a War Crimes Tribunal set up by the United Nations aimed to bring those responsible for carrying out Hitler’s orders to justice. In this case, human rights were important not only to send a clear message that violence and domination would not be tolerated by the world at large, but upholding human rights also honoured the lives of those killed in the gas chambers by Hitler and the Nazis.

Every life has value, no matter what colour skin a person is born in and no matter what country they come from or what language they speak. Human Rights are important as they uphold the dignity and value of a person despite their cultural background. As Martin Luther King states, “All men are created equal”. This is the basis of Human Rights and the ultimate aim of the Universal declaration of Human Rights. It aims to ensure the fair and just treatment of all human beings and to uphold the true meaning of human rights, which is above all else, equality.

Apartheid in South Africa was another example of a violation of human rights; black and white South Africans were separated and lived two separate lives – the black South Africans a sad, unhappy life filled with poverty, where they had very poor education. However, the white South Africans thought themselves more superior and more worthy of a better quality of life. They got the best of everything including, education, hospitals, and houses. They were allowed to vote and decide how the country was run. Nelson Mandela was one of the brave voices of human rights in South Africa. He stood for equality and his perseverance saw the downfall of white supremacy and the creation of a more balanced democratic society. It would wrong to say that South Africa is free from unrest, but it has come along way from the days of Apartheid, and shows the importance of human rights for maintaining law and order and equality.

The importance of human rights can also be seen in the example of Australia’s “Stolen Generation” where Aboriginal children were taken from their parents because white society believed they were unfit to raise their own children. As a result, hundreds of Aboriginal children ended up not knowing their parents, their culture or their connection with the land and were made to conform to the views of mainstream white society. This violation of human rights is still to be rectified. The basic framework of human rights remains an important but sometimes political issue for Australians. Human rights are important in negotiations between two cultures as they clearly spell out the fact that all men are born free and equal and this overrides what ever cultural differences and superiority issues one group may feel about the other.

Human rights are also important because they give the world hope that minorities will be protected, resources will be shared and the world is working towards peace for all people regardless of who they are or where they are from. Without the hope of peace, what is the world headed for?
The real heroes of the modern word are not super heroes or knights in shining armor, they are ordinary free thinking individuals who have stood for what they believe in and made the world a better place for all races, religions and cultures. They are women like Eleanor Roosevelt and men like Nelson Mandela and Martin Luther King. These people have refused to be silent and defended and protected the Human Rights of others. Human rights are important as they give a voice to the minorities and freedom to the oppressed. The importance of human rights can not be over stated and it could be argued that human rights represent safety, harmony, and freedom, things which are vital for ongoing world peace.