

# The Red Cross

## Pre-Reading

### A. Warm-Up Questions

1. What is the main purpose of the Red Cross?
2. Where have you seen the Red Cross symbol?
3. What do the cross and the color red symbolize?
4. When is the Red Cross needed most?
5. Would you want to work for the Red Cross?

### B. Vocabulary Preview

Match up as many words and meanings as you can.

Check this exercise again after seeing the words in context on page 2.

- |                                      |  |
|--------------------------------------|--|
| _____ 1. humanitarian ( <i>adj</i> ) | a) injured   |
| _____ 2. wounded                     | b) a difficult or horrific experience or situation                   |
| _____ 3. civilian                    | c) people that work or volunteer for a certain group or organization |
| _____ 4. round up                    | d) related to the well-being and safety of humans                    |
| _____ 5. ordeal                      | e) an everyday person who is not in the army or police force         |
| _____ 6. neutral                     | f) a feeling that one is worthy of respect                           |
| _____ 7. treaty                      | g) a symbol or image   |
| _____ 8. combatant                   | h) not taking or showing a bias toward a specific side in a conflict |
| _____ 9. emblem                      | i) an agreement or deal between countries                            |
| _____ 10. personnel                  | j) to gather   |
| _____ 11. alleviate                  | k) to make something (such as pain or sadness) less severe           |
| _____ 12. dignity                    | l) a person involved in an armed conflict                            |

#### Note:

The word *humanitarian* can also be used as a noun.  
It refers to a person who provides *humanitarian services*.



## Reading

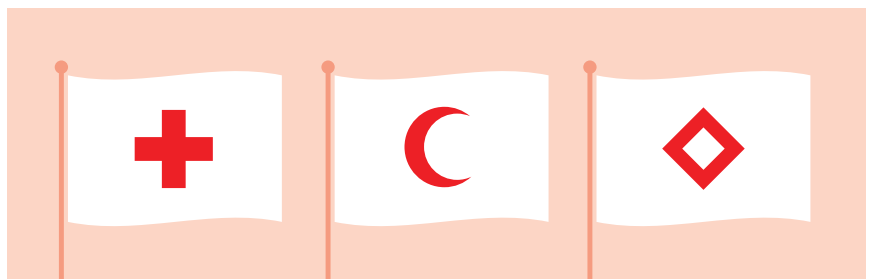
1. The International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) is a non-profit, **humanitarian** organization. The Red Cross was established in Geneva, Switzerland, in 1863. Its purpose is to offer protection and assistance to victims of war, natural disasters, and other emergencies.
2. In 1859, a Swiss man named Henry Dunant (also known as Jean Henri Dunant) went to Italy to do some business. He arrived shortly after a major battle between French and Austrian armies. Dunant was shocked to see tens of thousands of **wounded** and dying soldiers suffering on the battlefield. Dunant convinced local **civilians** to help them. He organized makeshift hospitals and **rounded up** medical supplies.
3. Dunant returned to Geneva a month later and wrote a book about this **ordeal**. In 1862, he published *A Memory of Solferino* and delivered it to politicians and military leaders. In his book, Dunant proposed the establishment of a **neutral** organization to help wounded soldiers during times of armed conflict. Dunant traveled around Europe promoting his humanitarian idea.
4. In 1863, Dunant formed a small team of humanitarians. Together, they convinced major governments to build medical relief teams to provide aid during wartime. The first ICRC **treaty** (First Geneva Convention), was signed in 1864. Those in support promised to care for all wounded **combatants**, regardless of race, class, nationality, religion, or political views. The ICRC adopted an official **emblem** (a red cross on a white background) to identify and provide protection for their neutral **personnel**.
5. Today, the non-profit International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement\* is a vast humanitarian network. Volunteers and employees around the world provide medical aid as well as humanitarian support to soldiers, refugees, orphans, prisoners, and civilians. Almost every nation in the world has a National Red Cross or Red Crescent Society. National societies focus on **alleviating** human suffering due to natural disasters and emergencies. They also help people gain independence and **dignity** in local communities.

### The 7 Fundamental Principles of the Red Cross Network

- humanity
- impartiality
- neutrality
- independence
- voluntary service
- unity
- universality

### \*Note:

The Red Cross, the Red Crescent (moon-shaped, added in 1929 for Muslim societies), and the Red Crystal (diamond-shaped, added in 2005 for societies who want an emblem with no religious connotations attached) are all official emblems used by National Societies of the Red Cross. Any combination of one or all of these emblems may be used by a Red Cross society.



## Comprehension

### A. True or False?

Read the statements below. If the statement is true, write T beside the sentence. If it is false, write F and correct the information in your notebook.

- \_\_\_\_\_ 1. A Swiss businessman came up with the idea for the Red Cross.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 2. The Red Cross is a non-profit organization that has employees and volunteers.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 3. A *combatant* is another word for soldier.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 4. The word *humanitarian* can be both an adjective and a noun.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 5. *A Memory of Solferino* was a fictional book written by the founder of the Red Cross.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 6. The national branches of the Red Cross are called *emblems*.

### B. Timeline

Put the following timeline in the correct order (1–8). One item is not mentioned in the reading. Place a star beside this event, and try to fit it into the timeline.

- \_\_\_\_\_ Henry Dunant established the ICRC with a small group of humanitarians.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Henry Dunant wrote a book about his humanitarian efforts in Italy.
- \_\_\_\_\_ A number of countries signed the First Geneva Convention.
- \_\_\_\_\_ The Red Crystal became the third official emblem of the Red Cross Movement.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Henry Dunant witnessed severe human suffering on a battlefield in Italy.
- \_\_\_\_\_ An additional emblem preferred by Muslims societies became an official symbol.
- \_\_\_\_\_ The ICRC won the Nobel Peace Prize for the first time in 1917.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Henry Dunant went around Europe with his book to try to convince people that something needed to be done to protect wartime soldiers.

### C. Ask & Answer

Practice asking and answering the following questions with your partner. Then write your answers in complete sentences in your notebook.

1. What inspired Henry Dunant to form a humanitarian organization to help wounded soldiers?
2. What did Henry Dunant do when he returned to Geneva in 1959?
3. How did the First Geneva Convention protect combatants on enemy soil?
4. Why do some national societies use a different emblem than the original red cross?

## Vocabulary in Context

Choose the correct part of speech for each underlined word. Can any of these words have different parts of speech in a different context?

- |  |  |  |
|--|--|--|
| <p>1. <u>Humanitarians</u> like Henry Dunant make the world a better place.</p> <p>a) noun<br/>b) verb<br/>c) adjective</p>  | <p>3. Our medical personnel will check your <u>wounds</u> and give you clean water to drink.</p> <p>a) adjective<br/>b) noun<br/>c) verb</p> | <p>5. By providing the family with clothing and shelter, we gave them back their <u>dignity</u>.</p> <p>a) adjective<br/>b) verb<br/>c) noun</p> |
| <p>2. When soldiers go into <u>combat</u>, they sometimes come home wounded.</p> <p>a) noun<br/>b) adjective<br/>c) verb</p> | <p>4. Can you <u>round up</u> some bandages and warm blankets?</p> <p>a) adjective<br/>b) noun<br/>c) verb</p>                               |  |

## Discussion

- Do you usually take action when you see a human injustice? Why or why not?
- Have you seen a National Red Cross/Crescent Society at work in your local community? What types of things do they do?
- Do you take part in any voluntary services in your community? If yes, what do you do? If not, what could you do?
- The term "neutral" means *to not take sides in a conflict*. The term "impartial" means *to treat all people fairly regardless of nationality, race, etc.* Why must Red Cross workers be neutral and impartial?
- Do you think this humanitarian network should adopt a single emblem that symbolizes impartiality and neutrality? If yes, what would it look like? Draw your idea in the box to the right and discuss it in a group.

