

Taking liberties

Topic

Gender equality and human rights

Learning outcomes

- Reflect on gender stereotypes
- Read about human rights
- Practise speaking in a discussion about human rights
- Review vocabulary related to rights and freedoms
- Practise giving opinions

Age group and level

Age 13–17 and adult B1+

Time

65 minutes with an additional 20 minutes of extension activities

Materials

- Taking liberties student worksheets
- Presentation
- Cut-ups

Introduction

This lesson plan is adapted from the British Council publication *Integrating global issues in the creative English language classroom*, which offers classroom activities that focus on the United Nations 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). This lesson plan focuses on Goal 5: Achieving gender equality and empowering all women and girls and is based on an activity from chapter 6 of the publication. In it, learners will reflect on gender stereotypes, discuss human rights, review vocabulary related to rights and look at a timeline of women's rights in the UK. They will also develop their speaking skills in a discussion activity and have the option to research their own timeline for another country.

Procedure

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| <p>1. Lead-in (10 mins)</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Without telling learners what the topic of the lesson is, tell them that they are going to do a creative activity in which they will invent four characters. You want them to invent and write down a name and two or three adjectives to describe the person and to write a brief description of what they look like (hair, eyes, body shape). You will just tell them what the person does for a job, and they must invent the rest. Give them one or two minutes to make notes for each character. <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Fighter pilot Primary school teacher Nurse Scientist Ask learners to compare notes in pairs. Monitor and correct any vocabulary errors. Then ask learners which characters they made male and which female. Why did they make those choices? Explain that this activity is taken from an experiment done with primary school students for a project called 'Redraw the Balance'. There is a video you can show at the end of class if learners are interested. In the experiment, primary students drew people doing jobs like firefighter, surgeon and fighter pilot almost exclusively as men. Gender stereotypes are defined between five and seven years of age. Ask if your learners showed similar bias. Explain that in this lesson, learners will think about gender equality. |
| <p>2. Think, Pair, Share activity (15 minutes)</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Tell learners to look at the first discussion questions on the worksheet, or display slide 2 of the presentation. Check understanding and help with any vocabulary problems. Learners should work individually to choose the three that are the most important for them and think of reasons why. Then put learners into pairs and ask them to compare which rights they feel are most important – encourage them to discuss why. Then as a whole group nominate several pairs to summarise their discussion. |
| <p>3. Pair discussion (10 minutes)</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> In pairs ask learners to discuss the two questions on the worksheet, or display slide 3. Allow five minutes for discussion, then elicit feedback from a few pairs to the whole class. Encourage them to reflect on the reason for their stance. |

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| <p>4. Vocabulary (10 minutes)</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Show slide 4 or write the following on the board: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A. healthcare 1. the right to vote in elections B. property 2. the boss of a company C. suffrage 3. services for giving medical help to people D. earnings law 4. objects or buildings that belong to someone E. CEO 5. periods of time when you don't work, e.g. such as illness F. time off work 6. pay rules made by the government Ask learners to work individually to match the vocabulary and its definition. Answers: A3, B4, C1, D6, E2, F5 |
| <p>5. Timeline (10 minutes)</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> There are two options for this activity. Put learners into pairs or small groups. Option 1: Cut up the strips, ensuring there is a set for each group. Option 2: Display slide 5. For Option 1: Ask the learners to put the papers in the order they think that women in the UK obtained each right. Give them the first one to help. The focus here is not on the learners getting the exact order but rather on them talking about the rights and speculating when they were obtained. For Option 2: Write the following dates on the board and ask students in groups to match each right to the date the right was obtained in the UK. Encourage and monitor discussion. DATES: 1867, 1870, 1880, 1926, 1928, 1948, 1975, 1982, 1997, 2013, 2015 Check answers together, encouraging discussion. You can display slide 6 or refer to the appendix. The appendix could also be copied and shared. Are learners surprised by anything? Which rights do women have in their country? Are there any they don't have? <p>NOTE: You can adapt this activity by choosing five or six rights to work with.</p> |
| <p>6. Discussion (15 minutes)</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Put learners into small groups of three or four and ask them to discuss the questions on the worksheet or display slide 7. Alternatively, you can choose the questions that you think will be most suitable/interesting for your learners and dictate them. Set a time limit of seven minutes for discussion. |

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| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Monitor the discussions, making a note of any errors or good language to focus on at the end of the discussion. Then you can re-group learners to report back on what they discussed with different learners, or do this as a whole class. |
| 7. Extension 1 (10 minutes) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Write some of sentences you heard while monitoring on the board. Use a mixture of good and incorrect language. Ask learners as a whole group which sentences are good and which need editing. Then guide them to correct the sentences with language errors. |
| 8. Extension 2 (10 minutes) OPTIONAL | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Show learners the recording of the stereotype experiment: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qv8VZVP5csA. Check if anything surprised them. Did the children show any similar bias to their own class? |
| 9. Homework | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> As a homework activity, you could ask learners to research a similar timeline of women's rights (or other human rights) for their own country or a country they know well. They could report back in the following class or make a poster detailing the most important rights gained. |
| 10. References | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Think, Pair, Share and other collaborative activities: https://www.teachingenglish.org.uk/community/magazine/how-can-i-make-my-classroom-more-collaborative |

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Appendix 1

Answers

1867 The London Society for Women's Suffrage is formed to campaign for women's right to vote.

1870 Women are allowed to keep their property and earnings when they marry.

1880 The University of London becomes the first university to award degrees to women.

1926 Women are allowed to buy property in the same way as men.

1928 Women gain the right to vote.

1948 The National Health Service (NHS) is created and gives everyone free access to healthcare for the first time.

1975 The Sex Discrimination Act is promoted by women's rights groups and becomes law, making it illegal to discriminate against women.

1982 It becomes illegal for bars/pubs not to serve women.

1997 Marjorie Scardino becomes the first woman CEO of a major company, Pearson.

2013 Same-sex couples can get married.

2015 Men and women can share time off work after having a child.