

TITLE WOMEN HAVING AN IMPACT ON THE LARGER WORLD

GRADES 9-12

SUBJECT AREAS

History

English

OVERVIEW

The purpose of this lesson is to deepen students' understanding of the impact that women have on society. Women's roles in this country and third-world countries are explored. Students research the impact women have had on a variety of issues; discuss and debate human rights and women's issues; engage in reading and writing activities that focus on women's contributions to the world; research and attempt to discover underlying pervasive cultural myths that define and often constrain women's roles in society and the larger world.

MEDIA COMPONENTS

People's Century: Half the People Videotape. In order to most effectively use this lesson, the videotape should be previewed by the teacher, then shown to the class. The film may be viewed in its entirety, or specific segments may be chosen to complement the specific themes addressed in this lesson.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

1. Students will gain an understanding of the impact women have on culture, society and the larger world.
2. Students will engage in debates and discussions centering on human rights.
3. Students will engage in reading and writing activities.
4. Students will conduct Internet-based research on women and their contributions to society.
5. Students will create a presentation based on their growing understandings of the roles women have played in society.
6. Students will examine the assumptions behind myths about women's roles.
7. Students will create an artistic representation.
8. Students will create a skit.

STANDARDS

LANGUAGE ARTS: GRADE 9

READING

- Analyze reading.

WRITTEN AND ORAL COMMUNICATION

- Identify and correctly use mechanics of punctuation, spelling, sentence construction and grammar to produce legible, appropriate manuscripts.

LANGUAGE ARTS: GRADE 11

READING:

- Analyze the features and rhetorical devices of different types of public documents.
- Analyze an author's beliefs about a subject.
- Critique the validity of arguments in public documents.

WRITTEN AND ORAL CONVENTIONS

- Demonstrate control of spelling, grammar, diction, and paragraph and sentence structure and an understanding of English usage.

WRITING

- Demonstrate an understanding of the elements of discourse in narrative, expository, persuasive, or descriptive writing assignments.

HISTORY: GRADE 12

SOCIAL SCIENCE

- Evaluate, take and defend positions on the fundamental values and principles of civil society.

PREP FOR TEACHERS

1. Preview the videotape **Half the People**.
2. Bookmark the following Web sites:

www.feminist.com

http://www.heifer.org/end_hunger/women.htm

<http://www.wilpf.org/>

<http://www.womankind.org.uk/>

<http://women3rdworld.miningco.com/newsissues/women3rdworld/>

<http://www.theglassceiling.com/resources/history.htm>

<http://www.wlo.org/intl/>

<http://www.un.org/Depts/unsd/ww2000/hr2000.htm>

<http://www.girlsinc.org/gc/page.php?id=9>

<http://womensissues.about.com/newsissues/womensissues/gi/dynamic/offsite.htm?site=http%3A%2F%2Fw>

www.un.org%2Fwomenwatch%2Fdaw%2Fbeijing%2Fplatform%2F

http://www.worldtrek.org/odyssey/latinamerica/rigoberta/rigoberta_story.html

<http://women3rdworld.miningco.com/newsissues/women3rdworld/library/bio/blwleaders.htm>

<http://www.smplanet.com/webpage/webpage.html>

<http://members.aol.com/ncmdr/>

<http://www.preventchildabuse.org/>

<http://www.calib.com/nccanch/>

<http://cgibin.erols.com/fpwin/food.htm>

http://dir.yahoo.com/Society_and_Culture/Issues_and_Causes/Poverty/Hunger/Organizations/

<http://www.childsupport-aces.org/>

<http://www.eeoc.gov/facts/fs-sex.html>

<http://scriptorium.lib.duke.edu/wlm/aims/>

<http://www.nhmccd.edu/contracts/lrc/kc/decade60.html#music>

<http://www.geocities.com/Athens/Olympus/3515/montg.html>

<http://www.core-online.org/History/montgomery%20boycott.htm>

<http://www.boggscenter.org/rosaparks.htm>

<http://ns1.netphoria.com/wort/thisweek/news/buzzcomm/buzzo62600.htm>

<http://www.theglassceiling.com/biographies/bio26.htm>

<http://209.207.163.32/nnt/fall-98/global.html>

INTRODUCTORY ACTIVITY: SETTING THE STAGE

1. Have students visit www.feminist.com and choose a quote they find inspiring.

- They should use their writing journals to explain why they like the particular quote.
 - Divide students into pairs and ask them to share their quote and the reasons they chose it. Ask for volunteers to share their thoughts with the larger class.
2. Have the class brainstorm answers to the following question:
- What issues concern women world-wide today?
3. a) Visit the following Web sites:
- The Heifer Foundation at http://www.heifer.org/end_hunger/women.htm
 - The Women's International League for Peace and Freedom at <http://www.wilpf.org/>
 - Womankind Worldwide at <http://www.womankind.org.uk/>
- b) Ask the class the following questions:
- What issues do these sites address?
 - What issues do they have in common?
 - How do these issues compare to the list that the class brainstormed?
- c) Ask your students to respond to the following question in writing:
- What events that have an impact on women in other countries have to do with you and your life?
- d) Divide the class into pairs to share their answers. Ask for volunteers to share their thoughts with the larger class.

LEARNING ACTIVITIES

ACTIVITY ONE: EXPLORING THIRD-WORLD ISSUES

The purpose of this activity is for students to deepen their understanding of the issues that inspire women's efforts to better the world.

1. Divide the class into small groups. Each group will be responsible for researching a women's rights issue in a country other than the United States. The following sites are good places to begin research:

<http://women3rdworld.miningco.com/newsissues/women3rdworld/>
<http://www.theglassceiling.com/resources/history.htm>
<http://www.wlo.org/intl/>
<http://www.un.org/Depts/unsd/ww2000/hr2000.htm>

2. Have each small group create a presentation depicting their findings. This may be in the form of a poster, a skit, an essay, a poem or any other artistic rendering.
3. After the presentations, create a class map that depicts the commonalities and differences in issues that are important to women world-wide based on the students' research.
4. Share students' presentations with other classes, if possible.

ACTIVITY TWO: WHAT ARE BASIC RIGHTS?

The purpose of this activity is to increase students' understanding of what constitutes "women's issues" and to increase their awareness of the societal and cultural challenges that women face in the world.

1. Visit the following site, which contains a Girl's Bill of Rights at <http://www.girlsinc.org/gc/page.php?id=9>.
2. Divide the class into three groups. Ask one group to create a Female Bill of Rights; ask the second group to create a Human Bill of Rights; and ask the third group to create a Male Bill of Rights. Have each group read their work aloud to the class.
3. Create a chart that highlights the differences and similarities of the three bills of rights. Have a discussion using the following questions as a guide:
 - Are women's rights fundamentally different from human rights?
 - What is the most important similarity among the three?
 - What surprised you the most in this exercise?
 - What are the critical differences (if any) among the three?
 - What characterizes the issues that pertain to women's rights?
4. Compare the lists the class generated with that of the United Nations Fourth World Conference on Women, Beijing, China September 1995. Find this list at <http://womensissues.about.com/newsissues/womensissues/gi/dynamic/offsite.htm?site=http%3A%2F%2Fwww.un.org%2Fwomenwatch%2Fdaw%2Fbeijing%2Fplatform%2F>. Discuss the similarities and differences.
5. Visit the following Web sites which have divided women's issues by race and ethnicity:
 - Latina women's issues <http://latinoculture.about.com/culture/latinoculture/msub18.htm>
 - Black women's issues <http://afroamculture.about.com/culture/afroamculture/cs/womensissues/index.htm>
 - Asian women's issues <http://asianamculture.about.com/culture/asianamculture/msub17.htm>
6. Answer the following questions:
 - Why are these issues categorized differently than general women's issues?
 - What are the similarities or differences among the three sites?
 - Do you think that dividing women's issues by ethnicity is useful? Why or why not?

ACTIVITY THREE: ACTIVE WOMEN

The purpose of this activity is to encourage students to examine how myths about women's roles pervade our culture and influence our thinking.

1. Have students work in small groups and choose (a) or (b) below. They should create a presentation to share what they have learned with the class.
 - a) Read about the life of Rigoberta Menchu, human rights activist at <http://www.worldtrek.org/odyssey/latinamerica/rigoberta/rigobertastory.html>.
 - b) Visit <http://women3rdworld.miningco.com/newsissues/women3rdworld/library/bio/blwleaders.htm> and choose one of the women from this list then research her efforts.
2. Combine individual group efforts to create a Women's Hall of Fame to share with the larger school and community. This may be done in the form of a Web age. The following site describes how to create one: <http://www.smplanet.com/webpage/webpage.html>.

ACTIVITY FOUR: TAKING ACTION

The purpose of this activity is to show how women take initiative in dealing with societal problems that affect humanity. **Please note:** This activity touches on sensitive subjects that may make some students uncomfortable. Create a safer environment by creating or revisiting any ground rules you have established with the class.

Divide the class into small groups. Give each group one of the imaginary scenarios below and ask the group to find solutions to it.

Group One:

Your friend tells you she was raped by her date.

Group Two:

You hear the sounds of a child being abused in the apartment next door to yours.

Group Three:

A neighborhood child tells you there is no food in her house.

Group Four:

A woman you work with tells you her husband isn't paying child support.

Group Five:

Your friend tells you she is being sexually harassed at work.

The following are some good Web sites for beginning research:

National Clearinghouse on Marital and Date Rape at <http://members.aol.com/ncmdr/>

Prevent Child Abuse America at <http://www.preventchildabuse.org/>

National Clearinghouse on Child Abuse & Neglect <http://www.calib.com/nccanch/>

Food Stamps <http://cgibin.erols.com/fpwin/food.htm>

Organization List:

http://dir.yahoo.com/Society_and_Culture/Issues_and_Causes/Poverty/Hunger/Organizations/

Child Support <http://www.childsupport-aces.org/>

US Equal Employment Opportunity Commission <http://www.eeoc.gov/facts/fs-sex.html>

1. Have the small groups share their solutions with the larger class.

ACTIVITY FIVE: CONFRONTING MYTHS

1. Read the following article by Gloria Steinem: <http://scriptorium.lib.duke.edu/wlm/aims/>.

Divide the class into small groups to identify and discuss the key myths Steinem describes in the article and their reactions to them. Each group should answer the following questions:

- What is the origin or underlying assumption each myth is based on?

- Do you agree with Steinem?
- In what ways are the myths Steinem discusses relevant to women in 2001?

Group One: Myth One Women are biologically inferior to men.

Group Two: Myth Two Women are already being treated equally in this society.

Group Three: Myth Three Children must have full-time mothers, and liberated women make bad ones.

Group Four: Myth Four Women are more moral than men are.

2. Discuss the following questions:

- How are myths born?
- How do they die?
- What responsibilities does a person have to dispel myths?
- What effect do myths have on children?

3. Ask the students to make a poster that illustrates a common pervasive myth regarding women and a way to debunk it.

ACTIVITY SIX: WOMEN & THE CIVIL RIGHTS MOVEMENT

The purpose of this activity is to further students' understanding of how women have reacted to injustice and participated in social change. The activity focuses on the ways in which the Civil Rights Movement and Women's Movement were inter-related. Beginning with a brief overview of the 1960s from varied perspectives.

1. Share the following Web site with the class:

<http://www.nhmccd.edu/contracts/lrc/kc/decade60.html#music>. Create a class list of events that may have contributed to the development of the Women's Movement.

2. Divide the class into small research groups to read about the Montgomery Bus Boycott.

Group One <http://www.geocities.com/Athens/Olympus/3515/montg.html>

Group Two <http://www.core-online.org/History/montgomery%20boycott.htm>

Group Three <http://www.boggscenter.org/rosaparks.htm>

Group Four <http://ns1.netphoria.com/wort/thisweek/news/buzzcomm/buzzo62600.htm>

Group Five <http://www.theglassceiling.com/biographies/bio26.htm>

3. Have the class create and perform a re-enactment of the Montgomery Bus Boycott. It should be designed to explain the boycott to an audience of students in grades 3 and 4. Use skits, props, music and dialogue in this dramatic rendering. If possible, present this to younger students.

4. If a re-enactment is performed for younger students, allow the younger students to ask questions after the performance, then discuss women's roles and the impact of the boycott on society.

CROSS-CURRICULAR EXTENSION ACTIVITIES

ACTIVITY ONE: WEARING THE VEIL

1. Read about Muslim women's custom of wearing the veil at <http://209.207.163.32/nnt/fall-98/global.html>.
2. Visit Women's Issues Third World <http://forums.about.com/ab-women3rdwrld/messages/?msg=31> then go to the following page and follow some of the e-mail threads that discuss Muslim women wearing the veil.

ACTIVITY TWO: MAKING MUSIC

1. Read the words to the song at <http://scriptorium.lib.duke.edu/wlm/flighton/flighton-po5-72.jpeg> then create a new and appropriate version focusing on women's issues in 2001.