



[Economica: Women and the Global Economy](#)

Educator's Guide

Bring *Economica* to Your Classroom!

Economica, the International Museum of Women's online, interactive, multimedia exhibition explores the many facets of women's contributions to the global economy.

- EXPERIENCE striking audiovisual slideshows of women in diverse economic circumstances
- READ original essays and rich companion content from experts and guest essayists
- HEAR FROM and INTERACT WITH leading scholars, activists, and economists from around the world
- CONTRIBUTE your comments, stories, and responses to the exhibition content

Incorporating *Economica* and its articles, case studies, podcasts and visuals in a classroom setting will further students' understanding of the current condition of the global economy, and allow them important insight into the involvement, contribution and power of women around the world. Educational activities derived from *Economica* will examine both the empowerment of women and the transforming global economy. Lesson plans and curricula can be made appropriate for English-speaking classrooms both within the United States as well as across the globe.

How to Use *Economica*: Getting Started

Economica offers a wealth of information, including texts and visuals that educators can use to create interactive discussion and activities in the classroom. This guide aims to introduce educators to *Economica* and to serve as a guide for the creation of curricula. Before developing a curriculum or lesson plan, the International Museum of Women encourages you to explore the *Economica* exhibition and its many offerings.

To start your journey through *Economica*, we recommend reading the [Curator's Statement](#), *An Economy That Works for Everyone*, written by curator Masum Momaya. This statement provides insight into the goals and ambitions of the exhibition and provides a framework for the many issues explored in *Economica*.

Narrowing Your Focus: Exploring Themes and Slideshow Case Studies



To begin to narrow your focus and develop a plan for how to use *Economica's* resources in the classroom, it is important to explore and examine the exhibition's major themes.

Economica presents eight major themes (listed on the right side navigation of the *Economica* Web pages) that consider the many ways women participate in the global economy. Each theme examines how specific women in distinct environments relate to and function within their personal economic systems, as well as examines how their experience relates to the global economy as a whole. Accompanying each theme is a photographic slideshow that portrays specific case studies. The slideshows provide a visual introduction to *Economica's* themes and offer insight into the lives of individual women around the world. These slideshows will help you to shape and design your own curriculum according to the themes you feel best meet your classroom needs.

Theme Descriptions and Sample Discussion/ Writing Questions

1. **[Basic Rights](#)** examines the role governments play in supplying people around the world with basic necessities, including food, health care, education and other social services. The corresponding photo essay *Bread* explores the extreme importance bread holds for citizens of Egypt—both as an economic tool and as a basic necessity—and explains how women have modified their lives in order to acquire bread.
Sample Question: How big of a role should a government play in maintaining the economic well-being of its citizens?
2. **[Family and Fertility](#)** seeks to reveal the ways in which women's reproductive needs and rights are often directly affected by external economic interests and public policies. The photo essay *Womb Economics* examines the role women play—and the sacrifices they make—in China's rapidly growing economy, and explores the detrimental affects China's One Child Policy has on Chinese women's economic autonomy.
Sample Question: Do women face specific economic challenges and vulnerabilities as a result of their biological make-up? How can you explain this?
3. **[Business Leadership](#)** surveys the upward mobility of women in business and finance sectors across the globe despite the global economic crisis. The photo essay *The Business of Women* looks at the wealthy nation of Qatar, and the surge of female business leaders whose work has helped to redefine traditional gender roles in the Middle East.
Sample Question: How can the rising economic influence of Arabic women help to eliminate cultural stereotypes and restrictions of women in the Middle East?



4. **Microenterprise** considers the successes and shortcomings of microcredit and microfinance as tools for women to overcome poverty across the globe. The photo essay *Giving Women Credit* offers insight into Bolivian women's proactive approach to microfinance as an independent effort to improving the economic future of their country.
Sample Question: How does microenterprise work? Can microenterprise alone achieve the high-level of reform needed to have a resounding impact on the global economy?
5. **Giving** explores how organizations that focus on women often have a more difficult time finding financial resources, and examines how women's organizations and women's funds are working to correct the unequal distribution of funding. The photo essay *Women's Wealth* examines the Nepalese women's organization Tewa that works to support female workers, promote education and push for policy reforms through self-sufficient efforts.
Sample Question: As the global economy faces a crisis, do you think there is still a large enough "pie" of resources to be evenly distributed amongst non-profit organizations?
6. **Marriage and Money** explores how transactions related to marriage, as well as the fate of one's spouse, can make women economically vulnerable. The photo essay *Growing Debt* looks at the economic and environmental devastation of India's cotton economy and the huge burden placed on Indian women as a result.
Sample Question: Does marriage limit a woman's ability to maintain financial independence and economic autonomy? How can this limitation be avoided?
7. **Property and Wealth** seeks to reveal the ways in which women around the globe are discriminated against as property owners. The section places special emphasis on how minority women in the U.S. are especially affected by the country's lending crisis. This phenomenon has furthered the gap in wealth and opportunity between classes within the United States.
Sample Question: Why do individuals of minority races, especially women, feel the heaviest burden under the United States' lending crisis? How is this a reflection of Capitalism?
8. **Grassroots Solutions** surveys the efforts of women around the world to establish community-based, grassroots organizations in response to the changing economy. The photo essay *Changing Conditions* gives an insightful look into community organization and mobilization in Morocco,



while examining women's roles and importance in the transitioning Moroccan economy.

Sample Question: Do you feel grassroots organizations on the community level are an effective strategy of mobilization? Why or why not?

Crafting a Curriculum: Develop Your Theme Further

An investigation of *Economica's* eight themes and the related slideshows provides insight into which topics would be most appropriate for your classroom or educational needs. Each of the eight themes offered within *Economica* begins with an overview essay written specifically about that theme by Curator Masum Momaya. To develop your chosen themes further and to learn more about the specific topics you wish to focus on, the International Museum of Women recommends reading Curator Momaya's introductory essay for each theme. These introductory essays will aid you in solidifying the ideas, concepts and details to be examined within each the theme.

Classroom Activities Model; Make a Lesson Plan

Classroom lessons, activities and discussions can be inspired by the theme photo essays, from curator Masum Momaya's overview essays, and from the other content found in each theme category. It would be beneficial to construct lesson plans that allow students to discuss, share experiences, think critically and exercise their creative potential.

The education model the International Museum of Women has previously utilized when crafting classroom curricula is outlined below. This is the format we feel is best suited to meet the U.S. National History-Social Science Standards, as well as most appropriate for international English-speaking classrooms or educational settings.

- A) **Consider:** Students are encouraged to *read* articles and other sources, *assess* introductory questions and engage in *quick-writes* to help solidify ideas.
- B) **Discuss:** Students should talk about their opinions and initial responses to the information they have read, both in small groups and with the class as a whole. During discussion, it is often beneficial if the educator or teacher constructs questions designed to activate critical thinking skills among students. (Examples of discussion questions pertaining to each theme are provided above.)
- C) **Create:** Students are given the chance to engage in group or individual activities that allow them to exercise their creativity while exploring a topic or theme. In-class debates, art projects, skits and mock-political elections



- are examples of classroom activities that allow students to solidify their comprehension of newly attained knowledge through creative expression.
- D) Share: Students are encouraged to share their creative projects with their peers and with their teachers. Comments and questions allow for ideas dialogued between students while also encouraging the use of constructive criticism within the classroom.
 - E) Analyze: As either an in class activity or a take-home assignment, students are pushed to further develop their writing skills, critical analysis tools and time management in crafting a piece of written work. Whether this be in the form of an essay, a manifesto or a narrative, students will benefit by constructing and arguing a thesis.

Exploring Further: Additional Resources from *Economica*

Economica offers several additional sources of information that can be used in a formal or informal classroom setting. The [Resources](#) section of *Economica* (located as a tab heading at the top of the page under the main title) includes the following resources to benefit students' learning.

The [Book List](#) and [Film List](#) feature works that portray and discuss women working in the global economy. These books and films are excellent additional classroom resources that provide insight into the roles women play around the globe, offer empowering depictions of women and help to challenge unbalanced gender roles. The films can be screened in class, followed by discussions or activities pertaining to their content. For upper grade levels, these books can be used as additional readings and can be paired with writing assignments such as a book report or book review.

The [Your Voices](#) section is another useful teaching resource. The stories and experiences of women striving for social change presented on these pages will inspire students and demonstrate how actions can be taken across the globe to reform the global economy. These stories and creative works can also be used as models for assignments. To further encourage dialogue, creative expression and community involvement among students, student stories can be [submitted for consideration](#) and possible publication in the *Economica* exhibition.

The [Forum](#) page is a quick and simple resource that allows students to respond to questions posed by the International Museum of Women, as well as by our visitors and contributors. These forum topics and conversations will allow students to connect with women and men around the world to discuss important issues and ideas that affect the global community.

We Welcome Your Feedback!



The International Museum of Women aims to present exhibitions that are both informative and useful to our visitors, as well as to create educational opportunities. We feel that the information, visuals and texts provided in *Economica* are excellent educational resources to be used in a classroom setting. We encourage educators to construct lesson plans and curriculums around this exhibition, using this Educator's Guide as an additional resource.

We would love to hear your feedback about the exhibition and your personal experience incorporating *Economica* into your classroom! Feel free to send us an email about your experience using *Economica* in the classroom at info@imow.org. Our Forum is also an ideal setting to make connections and engage in conversations with other educators from around the world. We encourage you to begin a new thread or to respond to an existing thread to share your thoughts and experience. Also, the International Museum of Women encourages you to join our [global online Community](#), where you can connect with other education professionals and scholars.