



INTERNATIONAL
MUSEUM OF WOMEN

Education Curriculum Template for:

Title: Women's Rights are Human Rights

Author: Museum Education Committee

Theme: Introduce rights of women and girls locally and internationally

Objective: Help students understand the intersection of their rights and those of others

Equipment/Materials:

- World map
- Women's political/work cartoons (optional)
- Markers, pens/pencils, paper, ribbon, scissors,
- Art Images from Women of the World exhibit
- Large sheets of blank butcher sized paper
- Copies of Effects Wheel

Lesson Plan:

Students will develop critical thinking skills through the exploration and viewing of art made by 10 women artist from different countries. The specific pieces illustrate areas the artist think unfair to women in their country and some basic human rights they see as being denied based on gender.

The images are part of the 'Women of the World' exhibit. Curator Claudia Demonte asked women artists in 174 countries "what image represents woman?" The International Museum of Women later developed curriculum dividing the artistic images into five categories: Female Ideal, Women's Invisible Work made Visible, Circle of Life, Celebrating Women's Power and Women's' Right s are Human Rights.

WHAT ARE HUMAN RIGHTS?

Begin with a brief large group discussion introducing students to the concept of rights.

The concept of a person's rights has been transformed so that it takes greater account

of women's lives. How women are treated within family, or their rights within marriage, their health care, or any obstacle based on custom (practices and attitudes held by their community for a long time) that tell woman she can only act a certain way, or do only certain things, now are seen as a denial of her basic rights - or denial of the same rights that men have.

"Name one right you think you have." "One you don't have." "One you will have as an adult you don't have now." "One you think all Americans have."

A person's **human** rights may be different than their civic rights (such as right to vote. Right as citizen to legal access, etc). And that some people have defined human rights in different ways.

Oxfam International (is a confederation of 12 organizations working together with over 3,000 partners in more than 100 countries to find lasting solutions to poverty, suffering and injustice) definition of rights: Everyone has a right to:

1) A sustainable livelihood. 2) Basic services. 3) Life and security. 4) Be heard. 5) Identity.

Ask: "Are you surprised by some? Do you agree? Disagree?"

Example: DISCUSSION OF ONE ART PIECE

Thailand **Ball and Chain**: Say: This image shows ways in which artist Worapanit Jiya-Amondej illustrated her sense of situation of women in Thailand. *"MY CONCEPT IS FEMALE RESTRICTION IN THAILAND."*

Questions to ask: Vary According to Age of Students

- What comes to your mind when you see this compelling image? Do we know for sure what artist means?
- Could she be referring to restrictions with regard to places women can go in safely? (mobility?) (higher level job choices and pay equal to those offered men?)
- Might the artist be just giving us a statement on fashion? Could this ball and chain connected to a high heel shoe image also be used in a campaign to raise consciousness about restrictive clothing practices in the United States? Do women's fashions in any way restrict our movement? What? Can you guess some?
- This bold image could be used by Thai women's groups as a poster to bring attention to Thailand's flourishing sex tourism and sex trafficking trade. (explain Thailand's reputation in this area. Be sure to mention that women's groups in Thailand, and elsewhere, are fighting this practice. See background sheet country information)
- How effective is this picture in getting message across?
- Is restriction a human rights issue?
- Do you see this as a work of art?

TWO CONSCIOUSNESS RAISING INTERACTIVE GROUP ACTIVITIES

Option One: Spectrum Activity (20-40 minutes)

Objective: Using kinetic learning, students learn the intersection of their rights and those of others.

Designate imaginary line in room which goes from one end of the room to the other. One end of this line represents strongly agree while the opposite end represents strongly disagrees. The middle can represent indifference or lack of knowledge regarding the specific question. Participants begin in the middle, and move along the line according to their response of the questions asked (*ask approval for adults to participate in this activity*). Once it appears students have settled in their respective places ask open ended questions to support their choice i.e. How great to see people who feel/think ..., when did these good or negative feelings begin? Brave of you to stand alone. How does it feel to stand alone, to group how does it feel to see someone stand alone? Ask some indirect questions to give students an opportunity to volunteer without being put on the spot. If the group feels comfortable with each other one might ask "Is there a question from someone in this group to someone in the other group?" Be sure to ask students why they are in the middle

Warning; This activity explores on a deeper level our influences from society, culture, and family. It can be a fun, get to know you game, but also can be loaded with peer pressure, and so tread carefully. Let students know that there will be difficult questions, and to answer what feels most comfortable. It is important to encourage them to think and answer for themselves and restrict cross talk until positions have been established.

Begin with less intrusive questions. Some questions may feel personal, important to encourage participants to take care of themselves.

Tell group: "Going to do short activity to introduce myself and each other and *"in a new way."* (Leader can take part, with permission of the class).

Optional statements to ask:

- I remember a time when I felt someone was being treated unfairly.
- I remember an occasion when I felt I was being treated unfair
- I remember a situation when I felt rules were not fair.
- I remember a time when I wanted to do something about rules I felt were unfair.
- I remember a time when I was not comforted by someone when I told of an unfair situation.

Questions taken from artists' works:

- I remember a time when I was unable to describe how I felt about the horrible plight of people. (Afghanistan piece)
- I remember a time when I was told not to be argumentative because people don't like it. (Liberia piece)
- I remember a time when I felt I had no power to change things (obliquely, Bhutan

piece).

- I remember a time when news of warfare made me feel hopeless (England piece).
- I remember a time when I felt pressured to act a certain way because I am female - or male, depending on group. (Nicaragua piece)
- I remember a time when I felt that women in general had special qualities and abilities that made them powerful (Vietnam piece? Botswana piece)
- I remember a time when I learned about a woman activist who fought for issues such as peace, or human rights, or..... (Guatemala)

Option Two: The Effects Wheel (20-40 minutes)
(See Teacher Notes: separate worksheet)

This activity raises awareness and stimulates discussion about ONE human rights issue. It can be used to examine a contemporary U.S. issue, or one taken from an art piece. The idea is for the group to understand the EFFECT of the denial of a basic human right.

Objective: To raise awareness, clarify thinking and generate discussion about the inter-relatedness and consequences of women's human rights abuses.

Materials: Chart paper and markers

Copies of "Effect Wheel" for if use small group option.

You will need: The Effect Wheel Worksheet blown up and placed in front of group so everyone can see. OR, separate worksheets for students to fill in at their desks. - and pencils.

Start with a general question which will be placed in the first circle. It always must start with "if," and follow with the question "what then???"

Examples of possible contemporary issues:

"If a girl ran away from home at age 12...then"

"If a girl had a baby before she completed the 10th grade then...."

"If girls were denied computer classes...then"

"If women held as many elected positions as men in our government, then..."

"If women could walk anywhere in the city at night without fear....then"

"If a girl's team were told they could not use the sports fields to practice ...then"

To use a question generated by an art piece hold up

Democratic Republic of Congo piece and read quote by Nathalie Ndolo.

- Ask: what right is the girl in this picture being denied?"

In first circle, an obvious issue is denial of the right to an education. In first circle write:

"If girls were forbidden from going to school, then....?"

As group writes down - or calls out - their responses put them on the EFFECTS WHEEL in the first spoke. Then, follow each of those responses out to the second and third spokes of the Wheel.

For example, using "If girls were forbidden from going to school, then"...some of the responses might be:

"They might not learn to read and write."

“They would not meet any new friends.”

“They would only learn how to do housework.”

“They might get married early because there is no point in trying for jobs that demanded education.”

“The boys in their families would be better educated than the girls.”

Write these responses on the First Order Effects spokes closest to the circle.

You can use just one response here, or try and fill in all six spokes of the First Order Effects on the Wheel.

For example: a First Order Effect to “They might not learn to read and write” might be: “they could not get a higher education....then” Or “people could take advantage of them, ...then.”

Continue outward, filling in the spokes (Second and Third Order Effects) using this process. To save time, you could work with only one response for each Effect Order).

Once the activity is completed, discuss with the group:

- “Are you surprised by some of the effects?”
- “What do you think needs to be done if you want to change any of them?”
- “Looking again at the art from the Democratic Republic of Congo, what do you think the future holds for this girl?”
- “But, also look at the way the artist has painted the women. Does she seem to respect them? Are they downtrodden, or angry? Why do you think this is so?”

Adapted from Lewis and Davies, “Gender Equity in Mathematics & Science,” Canberra, Australia, Curriculum Development Center, 1988.

Art Piece(s)

Art images from “Women of the World

- AFGHANISTAN: GHATOL. *“I RAISE THE CRY OF THE FORGOTTEN AND OPPRESSED WOMEN OF AFGHANISTAN.....”*
- AUSTRIA- Reingard Klingler. *“...This icon (Madonna) defines qualities as ‘feminine’ - qualities vital for Western capitalist societies but with the lowest remunerative and social prestige.”*
- BAHRAIN - Fatima Fakhro. *“Women are trapped in the cage of men’s expectations....expected to obey harsh rules set upon them by a male-dominated society.”*
- BHUTAN: DEWAKI TIMSINA *“In our Culture, a woman is seen by the male society as their property...traditionally husband is believed like god for a wife.”*
- DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF CONGO – Nathalie Ndolo. *“The girl will not go to school because African custom obliges daughters to help their mothers.”*
- ENGLAND: PAT DERRICK *“Women and children are targets in modern warfare. How can a mother protect her child against weapon technology?”...*
- ERITREA: ELSA YACOB TEMNEWO *“I LOVE MY WORK; IT MAKES ME MORE AWARE WHEN I TALK WITH MY MIND AND SHARE IT WITH OTHERS.”*
- INDIA – Jhumka Gupta. *“...The Hindu goddess Durga symbolizes strength. Her many arms and third eye represent divine feminine power...”*

- NICARAGUA; MARIA JOSE ZAMORA *“Images of problems and fights most women deal with every day. - physical abuse”*
- THAILAND - Worapanit Jiya-Amondej illustrated her sense of situation of women in Thailand. *“MY CONCEPT IS FEMALE RESTRICTION IN THAILAND.”*

Standards: I. World History National Standards: Grades 5-12,

Standard #6, C: Promises and paradoxes of the second half of the 20th century.

- Demonstrate understanding of how ideologies of democracy, private enterprise, and human rights have reshaped political and social life.

- Assess the progress of human and civil rights around the world since the 1948 U.N. Declaration of Human Rights

- Analyze changes in the lives of women in both industrialized and developing countries since World War II and assess the extent to which women have progressed toward social equality and economic opportunity.

II. World History AP: What Student are Expected to Know:

1750 - 1914:

#4. Changes in social and gender structure.

#7. Debates over the nature of women’s roles in this period, and how do these debates apply to industrialized areas and how do they apply in colonial societies.

Discussion of Age of Enlightenment ideas about: natural rights.

1914 - Present:

#6. Social Reform and Social Revolution (changing gender roles; family structures; rise of feminism...)

#7: Global cultural forces and patterns of resistance.

AP Geography: “How culture...represents cultural identity.”

“How particular policies affect the spatial organization of cultural and social life.”

History-Social Science Standards

Grade Ten:

- Students trace the rise of democratic ideas and develop an understanding of the historical roots of current world issues.

- Students develop an understanding of current world issues and relate them to their historical and geographic, political, economic, and cultural contexts.

- Students consider multiple accounts of events in order to understand international relations from a variety of perspectives.

Analysis Skills:

- Student analyzes how change happens at different rates at different times: understand that change is complicated and affects not only technology and politics but also values and beliefs.

- Students construct and test hypotheses, collect and evaluate and employ information from multiple primary and secondary sources, and apply it in oral and written

Teachers Notes:

Activism/ Political Women

These questions are developed to encourage critical thinking and dialogue among students to enhance their knowledge of international issues concerning women and girls.

Questions to ask: Vary According to Age of Students

AFGHANISTAN: GHATOL. "I RAISE THE CRY OF THE FORGOTTEN AND OPPRESSED WOMEN OF AFGHANISTAN....."

Viewing Questions:

- When do you think this picture was made - while or after the Taliban was in power? (while in power).
- Since the Taliban sometimes killed women who were not wearing traditional head covering, why do you think this woman is shown with her face uncovered? How does this reflect her status? Her options?
- Here an artist work gives "voice" to voiceless. "I raise the cry of the forgotten and oppressed women of Afghanistan." Then, her painting illustrates how little power this woman has and how almost invisible she is.

The high rate of maternal mortality in Afghanistan is a human rights crisis. In Herat Province, in a study done in fall, 2002, 593 women died during childbirth for every 100,000 live births. 87% of women in survey reported having to obtain permission from a husband or male relative to seek health care, and if they did, health care was inadequate. Over 75% of women are illiterate. In the year 2,000, the UN estimated that there were about 28,000 widows in the Afghan capital of Kabul alone. This painting was done during this period. Women once enjoyed a number of rights and freedoms before in the Taliban years being forced into purdah in public - i.e. must be accompanied by a male relative, and swathed in traditional burqua. Today, in most rural, traditional areas, women still are completely covered in public. Although women in the capital of Kabul voted in large numbers in the last election, in those regions where warlords still rule, few women ventured outside their compounds to vote.

AUSTRIA

Viewing Questions:

In this work the artist has depicted the Madonna as the Christian icon of feminine virtues such as caring, nurturing, and modesty.

- How do the words over and around the figure change the meaning?
- Read the artist's comments about women's low social prestige. How does she weave her ideas into the piece?

Note the colors that the artist has chosen.

- Is the selection of color important?

Women in Austria enjoy high levels of education, a relatively high female representation

in its Parliament, (bolstered by a quota system promoting women's representation in national legislation), low fertility (1.3%), and legal abortion on request. In spite of this, the artist sites "strong traditional beliefs" in women's social roles in this largely Catholic country. The artist further plays on the fact that Vienna hosts a UN Center - a place where women's human rights should be promoted.

BAHRAIN

Viewing questions:

- In Bahrain women are achieving more rights than those granted to the previous generations. Women vote, can work outside the house, attend universities. Can you think of things that continue to restrict women that led this artist to paint this picture and mention "harsh rules" that women must follow?
- If you were to make a picture of yourself inside a cage, what restriction on your life would you comment on or illustrate?

Women voted on equal terms with men for first time in 2001. 32% work outside the home, mainly in service industries. There is 100% enrollment in primary schools for both boys and girls, and 57% students are universities are women. Women tend to have only 2.9 children. Yet no women have been elected to government office, and 17% of women remain illiterate. Although Bahrain is a rapidly changing society, traditional restrictions on women persist especially among the older generation.

BHUTAN

Viewing Questions:

- In this work a woman is bowing in front of her husband. It is a posture used when praying in front of a sacred image. "Pati nai parmashwar" roughly translated means "your husband is a God to whom you should pray." Why do you think she has assumed this posture?
- If you were considered the property of your father, husband, or grown son, what rights might be denied you? What lack of freedoms, individual action?
- The book has an "x" through it. What does this signify?
- Women in the early American women's movement in the 19th century were most interested in gaining the right to own property in their own name, and the right to their children in case of a divorce. Why might these rights be more important to women than suffrage?

Bhutan, roughly the size of Switzerland, is in the eastern Himalayas located between Tibet in the north and Indian states in the South. A form of Mahayan Buddhism is practiced there, (Tantric form) and has become the official religion. It is a kingdom perched in eastern Himalayas in Southern Asia. A chief abbot, head of Central Monk body, enjoys an equal rank with the King.

There are no figures for female education levels. (only Asian country where this is true). Over 90% women work in agriculture. 5.5 children per woman. Infant and maternal mortality at birth is high. Only 10% women use contraceptives. Abortion is illegal under all circumstances. Over 75% women living in poverty; only Afghanistan in all Asia has similar level of poverty.

DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF CONGO

Viewing Questions:

The artist notes that the girl's need to help her mother overrides her ability to attend school.

- How would this girl going to school affect the work of her mother? How will it affect her life choices?
- Which aspects of the image suggest that the artist values and dignifies the woman and girl's labor?

In this piece we note that the girl's need to help her mother overrides her ability to attend to school. At the same time it seems that the artist values and dignifies the labor of both women. The average woman has 7 children, 60% women receive prenatal care, and life expectancy for women is 52 years on average. Things have gotten better in the last 10 years; now between 50% - 75% girls attend primary school, although few go on to university. This also is a region where more women than men are in field work. In Sub-Saharan Africa in general, about 95% women on average are engaged in feeding the family. 90% of their time is spent in fuel and water processing; 80% in storing and transporting. Girls often become caretakers for their siblings in this part of the developing world, with rural children twice as likely as urban children to be economically active.

ENGLAND: PAT DERRICK *"Women and children are targets in modern warfare. How can a mother protect her child against weapon technology?"...*

Viewing Questions:

- What do you think this baby's vest is made of? (the real image was of steel wool!)
- In what ways does the painting reflect the comments of the artist?

Although England has not suffered recent civil wars, the population has been subjected to a number of terrorist attacks. Further, a strong anti-war movement within some English women's groups has resulted in their call for an end of modern weapons against which ordinary people have no protection.

ERITREA: ELSA YACOB TEMNEWO *"I LOVE MY WORK; IT MAKES ME MORE AWARE WHEN I TALK WITH MY MIND AND SHARE IT WITH OTHERS."*

Viewing questions:

- What aspect of this image evokes the strongest response in you? Why?
- The artist states that she was a soldier in the Eritrea People's Liberation Front. What perspective might this give her in depicting war and violence?
- What other painting in the collection seems to be saying the same thing as this one?

This aggressive image of mother protecting her child illustrates women's traditional form of protest as mothers - a venerated role which has given them some right to be heard in the political public arena. The long border war with Ethiopia ended disastrously for Eritrea. Eritrean women were in the forefront of war. They were one-third of Eritrea's army, holding command positions, leading tanks into battle, were wounded, killed, and gave birth in the field. Today, when border skirmishes heat up, they are still in the front line. In some ways they were able to use this equal status to liberate themselves from repressive traditions. Changes have been made. Now women run businesses, are represented in government (30% of parliamentary seats are reserved for women), and they can own property. But 85% remain illiterate; 85% young girls - both Muslim & Christian - are still subjected to female genital mutilation.

INDIA

Viewing Questions:

Durga is a popular Hindu goddess who has the power to create life and encourage fertility in the fields. She is also a warrior goddess. In her arms she carries various powers--weapons and emblems given to her by the male gods.

- Do you think it is inconsistent to be both a warrior and a creator of life?

Hindus believe that all women carry within them divine energy, or power (sakti). How is this concept expressed in the image and text?

Durga is commonly worshiped in Hindu households, and is a popular figure in many stories about the lives of the gods. (she appears in comic books, films, and so forth). The best known account of Durga is of her victory over the wicked god Mahisa when the male gods, who were unable to destroy him, created Durga and gave her the weapons seen in this painting. Durga is not seen as a submissive god, but one who can hold her own against any male on the battlefield. Like Vishnu, it is believed that she can create and destroy the world.

NICARAGUA

Viewing Questions:

- This work is an "assemblage" - objects assembled together. Note some of the elements that the artist has chosen. In what ways does this artist express her feelings about "what it means to be female?" (angry scribble lines, nails, bride without groom, vivid primary colors, etc.).

- Why do you think the artist ripped the wedding photograph, showing only part of the groom?

- The artist refers to women's "physical abuse." What do you think is the most common form of violence against women world wide?

- Do you think there is such a thing as "emotional" or psychological abuse? Examples?

- The artist states here that "Virginity is ideal state to enter marriage." For women as much as men? Why might society view virginity as a particularly ideal state for a bride? (both historically and culturally).

- The artist's reference to "impoverished" women introduces the human rights issue of women's economic rights: since women worldwide tend to be employed in the most menial occupations, are paid less than men, and have little chance to own or control large companies, their "right" to a sustainable economic livelihood on par with males not met.

In 2002, 28-69% Nicaraguan women reported being physically abused by an intimate partner. There are rape reform laws, but no domestic violence laws. 4.4 average number of children. 80% girls in elementary school; 53% secondary. 44% in labor force. In the USA, 23-33% women say they have experienced similar physical abuse.

Thailand *Ball and Chain*: Say: This image shows ways in which artist Worapanit Jiya-Amondej illustrated her sense of situation of women in Thailand. *"MY CONCEPT IS FEMALE RESTRICTION IN THAILAND."*

- What comes to your mind when you see this compelling image? Do we know for sure what artist means?
- Could she be referring to restrictions with regard to places women can go in safety? (mobility?) (higher level job choices and pay equal to those offered men?)
- Might the artist be just giving us a statement on fashion? Could this ball and chain connected to a high heel shoe image also be used in a campaign to raise consciousness about restrictive clothing practices in the United States? Do women's fashions in any way restrict our movement? What? Can you guess some?
- This bold image could be used by Thai women's groups as a poster to bring attention to Thailand's flourishing sex tourism and sex trafficking trade. (explain Thailand's reputation in this area. Be sure to mention that women's groups in Thailand, and elsewhere, are fighting this practice. See background sheet country information)
- How effective is this picture in getting message across?
- Is restriction a human rights issue?
- Do you see this as a work of art?

Thailand has a large portion of women engaged in economic activities (67% women), but they they earn significantly less money than men (68% average wage than male wages). Girls attend secondary education in almost equal to males. Families have 2.1 children per woman, and won the right to vote in 1932. In spite of relatively positive statistics, there is the reality that sex tourism is a flourishing business in Thailand. Thailand's 100,000 to 250,000 prostitutes support a flourishing industry whose brothels, massage parlors, and nightclubs attract tremendous numbers of male tourists every year. Such work thrives on economic disparities between men and women, and between regions on a global scale. As poverty deepens in Eastern Europe, for example it became a major source region for prostitutes. Tens of thousands of people - predominantly women and children - are trafficked into the United States as well. Child prostitution now is endemic in San Francisco where a 2003 report found that as many as 3,000 girls are child prostitutes working here. Women's groups in countries from which male tourists come (Japan, Germany, even the United States) have spotlighted sex tourism agencies based in their countries. They use laws which prohibit the promotion of prostitution as a criminal offense.

Art Projects

#1: Create a protest poster. Students as activists work with one of the human rights themes to inspire action or inform their friends/family. How would students engage the efforts of their friends in a particular Human Rights violation? (a collage, stats, websites, quotes etc.)

#2: Develop a portrait of woman in a particular country. Research 'A day in the life' perhaps a compare and contrast of a young women of similar age.

#3: Research political cartoons from different countries and times. Select one cartoon to analyze, and then redraw it to present a positive view or, to rewrite the caption.

Action Steps or Reflections:

What are your current states' initiatives around treatment of female inmates?

Which countries have ratified CEDAW?

In what ways have you seen propaganda being used to sway public opinion?

Identify three friends or relatives you will share what you've learned with.

Sources:

2002 Women of Our World, U. S. Population Reference Bureau, 2002.

The State of Women in the World Atlas, Joni Seager, Penguin Press, 2003.

The World's Women: Trends and Statistics, UN Publication, 2002.

Where Women Stand: An International Report on the Status of Women in 140 Countries - 1997-1998, Naomi Neft & Ann Levine, Random House, 1997.

Oxfam International www.oxfam.org/eng/about.htm