

International Women's Day still necessary (Wed 9 Mar, 2005)

WARM-UPS

1. CHAT: Talk in pairs or groups about women's rights / being a woman / Wangari Maathai / equality / violence against women / women heads of state / ...

2. WOMAN BRAINSTORM: Spend one minute writing down all of the different words you associate with the word 'woman'. Share your words with your partner / group and talk about them.

3. MAN OR WOMAN: With a partner, write down 5 advantages of being a woman, and five advantages of being a man. Discuss which advantages are better. Change partners and relate what you discussed with your previous partner. Change partners again and discuss again. Return to your original partner and decide whether it is more advantageous to be male or female.

4. GENDER CHANGE: Role play members of the opposite sex. Ask questions about the new roles as a man / woman. Talk about your new-gender lifestyle, problems, dreams etc. Do you like (in your new roles) being a man / woman?

5. MY COUNTRY: Talk about the status of women in your own country. Sit down in groups and decide which country has greater equality for women.

6. WOMEN IN MY LIFE: Talk with a partner about the women in your life. Describe the characters of each woman and explain why you love / like / dislike them.

7. COMPLAINTS: In groups, list the most common complaints women have against men (and vice versa). Discuss how these complaints might be solved.

8. 2-MINUTE GENDER DEBATES: Rotate pairs often.

- a. Being a woman is harder. vs. Men have the toughest lives.
- b. Men don't have to give birth. vs. Women don't have to fight in wars.
- c. Women are better leaders. vs. There are only four female heads of state in the world.
- d. Housework should be shared between men and women. vs. It's a woman's job.
- e. Women are exploited through advertising. vs. Many men also show their bodies in ads.
- f. Prostitution should be illegal. vs. It's the world's oldest profession.
- g. A quota system should exist in companies and governments to ensure 50% of managers are women. vs. Don't be ridiculous.
- h. Gender equality and respect for women should be taught from elementary school. vs. That's sexist.
- i. Violence against women should be punishable by life imprisonment. vs. That's a human rights abuse against men.
- j. Language should be more gender equal. Why the "he" in "she", or the "man" in "human"? vs. Hey. Language is language.

PRE-READING IDEAS

WORD SEARCH: Look in your dictionaries / computer to find collocates, other meanings, information, synonyms ... of the words 'woman' and 'day'.

TRUE FALSE: Guess whether the following statements about the article are true or false:

- a. International Women's Day celebrated the advances women have made. T / F
- b. The first International Women's Day was held in 1910. T / F
- c. The struggle for women to achieve full equality is nearly over. T / F
- d. A United Nations blueprint outlined better living conditions for women. T / F
- e. Kenyan Nobel prize winner Wangari Maathai called for women to fight men. T / F
- f. In Bangladesh men throw acid into the faces of women. T / F
- g. Thirty thousand people are to do a seven-month, 50-country women's march. T / F
- h. Women and men in Europe receive the same wages. T / F

SYNONYM MATCH: Match the following synonyms from the article:

- | | |
|---------------|---------------|
| (a) mass | agenda |
| (b) advances | light |
| (c) struggle | promise |
| (d) blueprint | breakthroughs |
| (e) poverty | salaries |
| (f) potential | walk |
| (g) beacon | fight |
| (h) disfigure | giant |
| (i) march | mutilate |
| (j) wages | destitution |

PHRASE MATCH: Match the following phrases based on the article:

- | | |
|----------------------------------|-----------------|
| (a) mass rallies around | profile |
| (b) achieve full | equality |
| (c) highest | their potential |
| (d) the upholding of | way to go |
| (e) women need to be given equal | the world |
| (f) an opportunity to exploit | raped |
| (g) fully realize gender | space |
| (h) Elsewhere | equality |
| (i) gang | in the world |
| (j) still a long | human rights |

GAP FILL

International Women's Day still necessary

BNE: International Women's Day ended Tuesday with mass _____ around the world organized to express two important points. One is to celebrate the advances and achievements women have made since the first IWD was established in Copenhagen in 1910; The other is to tell women of the world their struggle to _____ full equality is not yet over. The highest profile meeting took place at the United Nations, where delegates discussed a blueprint for improving living conditions for women. Priorities included better health care, the upholding of human rights and reduction of _____ against women, and a greater say in economic and political issues within their countries. Kenyan Nobel Peace prize winner Wangari Maathai _____ for women to fight poverty, "It is us who will eventually have to convince our governments that women need to be given equal space, to be given an opportunity to exploit their potential, and that it is not a _____ for women to participate in decision-making — it is a right." Former U.N. assistant secretary-general Angela King said, "Let us _____ today ... that the flame for women's freedom and equality become a shining beacon for action to fully realize gender equality, development and peace." Elsewhere in the world, Bangladeshis rallied for better protection against the acid attacks which so horribly _____ women's faces; in Pakistan Mukhtar Mai, the woman who was gang raped because of her brother's sexual activities, _____ a protest against violence on women; in Sao Paulo, Brazil, 30,000 people gathered for the start of a seven-month, 50-country women's march; and in Europe politicians called for women to be given equal wages. There is still a long way to go, and still a need for the next U.N. blueprint in 2015.

called pledge led rallies violence disfigure achieve gift

HOMEWORK

- 1. VOCAB EXTENSION:** Choose several of the words from the text. Use a dictionary or Google's search field (or another search engine) to build up more associations / collocations of each word.
- 2. INTERNET:** Search the Internet and find information on women's rights. Share your findings with your class next lesson.
- 3. MY BLUEPRINT:** Prepare a blueprint that will achieve full equality in your country within a year. Send it to your local politician / head of state.
- 4. LETTER TO A VIOLENT MAN:** Write a letter to a man who lacks respect for women and physically abuses them. Ask him questions. Tell him your opinions of him.

DISCUSSION

- a. What was interesting in this article?
- b. What was disturbing in this article?
- c. What was hopeful in this article?
- d. Why don't women in power fight more for equality?
- e. When was the last time you heard the British Queen, Japanese Empress, Condoleeza Rice... talk about equality for women?
- f. What inequality do you see / experience on a daily basis?
- g. Why do many men lack respect for women?
- h. Should prostitution be legalized?
- i. When will full equality be achieved?
- j. Would a female US president make a difference?
- k. Would a change in advertising make a difference?
- l. Would a change in education make a difference?
- m. Why are women still not treated equally in 'leading' democracies (USA and Europe)?
- n. What is the biggest change that needs to be made to move towards equality?
- o. What kind of inequality exists in your country?
- p. Should there be much stiffer penalties for crimes involving violence against women?
- q. Five of the accused in the Mukhtar Mai gang rape case in Pakistan were acquitted last week. What do you think?
- r. What is the worst crime against women and what should the punishment be?
- s. Who is the greatest woman you know? What makes her so great?
- t. Who is the greatest woman in world / your country's history?

TEXT

International Women's Day still necessary

BNE: International Women's Day ended Tuesday with mass **rallies** around the world organized to express two important points. One is to celebrate the advances and achievements women have made since the first IWD was established in Copenhagen in 1910; The other is to tell women of the world their struggle to **achieve** full equality is not yet over. The highest profile meeting took place at the United Nations, where delegates discussed a blueprint for improving living conditions for women. Priorities included better health care, the upholding of human rights and reduction of **violence** against women, and a greater say in economic and political issues within their countries. Kenyan Nobel Peace prize winner Wangari Maathai **called** for women to fight poverty, "It is us who will eventually have to convince our governments that women need to be given equal space, to be given an opportunity to exploit their potential, and that it is not a **gift** for women to participate in decision-making — it is a right." Former U.N. assistant secretary-general Angela King said, "Let us **pledge** today ... that the flame for women's freedom and equality become a shining beacon for action to fully realize gender equality, development and peace." Elsewhere in the world, Bangladeshis rallied for better protection against the acid attacks which so horribly **disfigure** women's faces; in Pakistan Mukhtar Mai, the woman who was gang raped because of her brother's sexual activities, **led** a protest against violence on women; in Sao Paulo, Brazil, 30,000 people gathered for the start of a seven-month, 50-country women's march; and in Europe politicians called for women to be given equal wages. There is still a long way to go, and still a need for the next U.N. blueprint in 2015.