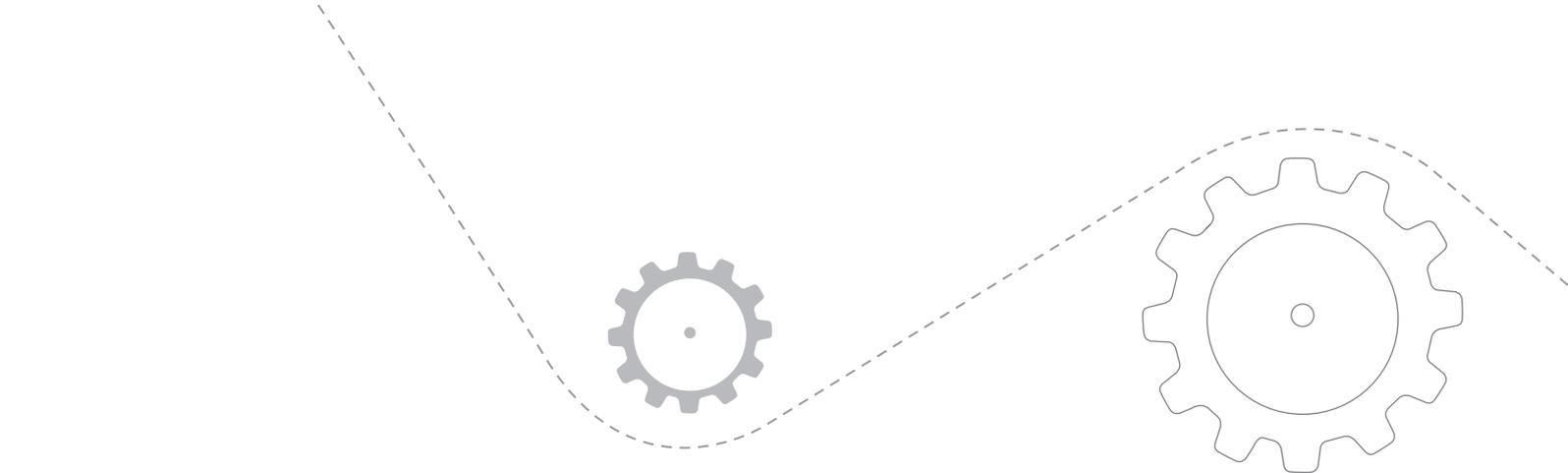




Equality is Gender-Free

An Introduction to Breaking
Gender Stereotypes within the School Space

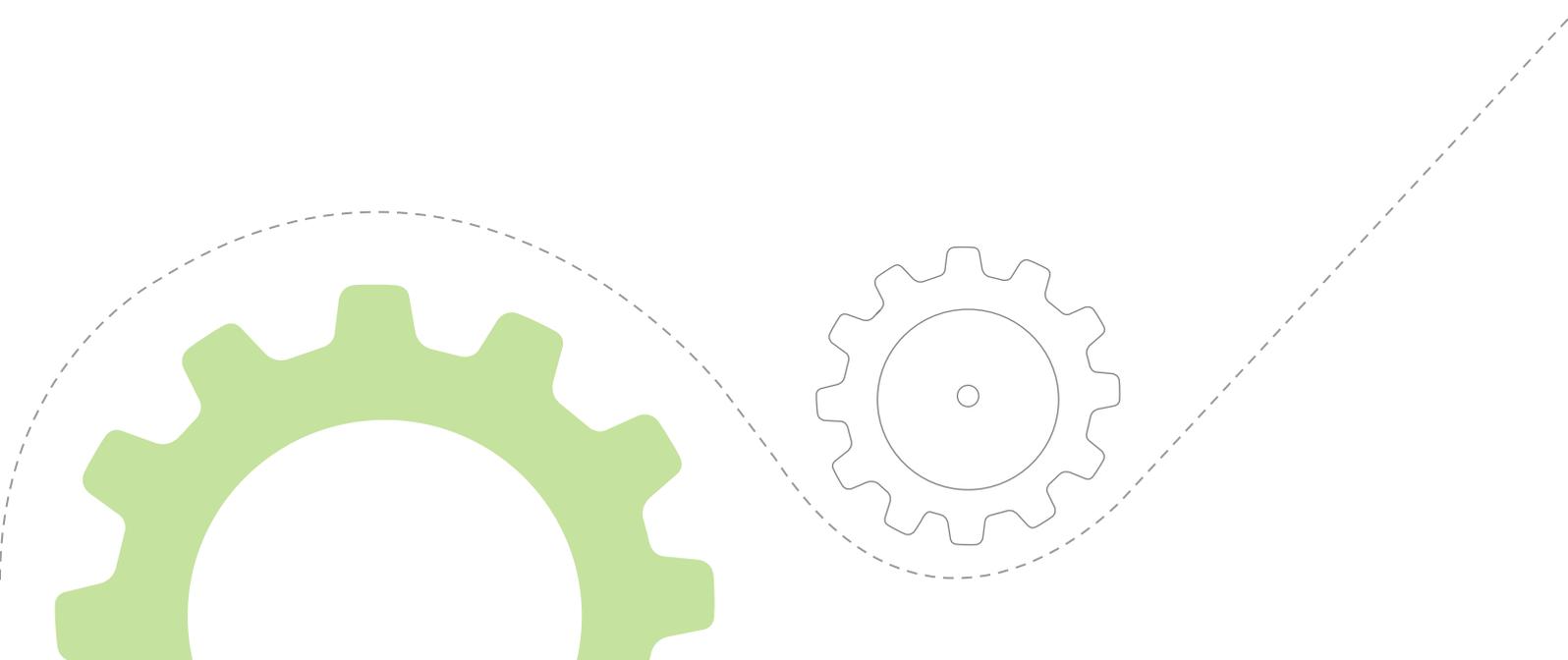
Human Rights Education Programme - Amnesty International India

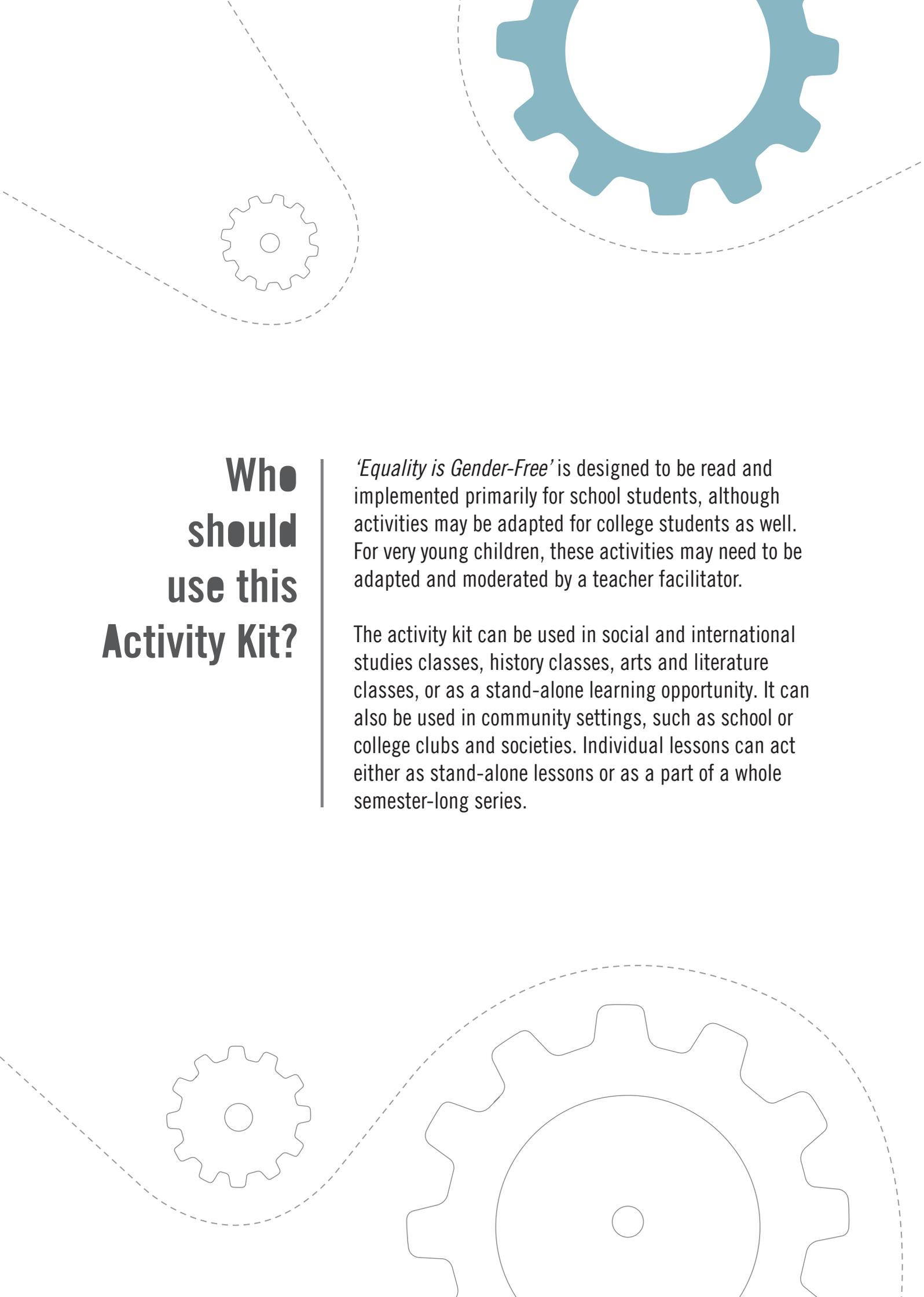


How to use this Activity Kit

'Equality is Gender-Free' aims to introduce the vast and complex issue of Gender Discrimination, with a special focus on dealing with gender inequality in school spaces.

Through interactive and participatory activities, this kit will help you acquire a basic understanding of gender inequality. Additionally, it will also help you to identify and recognise instances of gender stereotyping in daily school life, and recommend steps you can adopt to tackle these stereotypes. All activities in this kit are segregated by age, and have been indicated accordingly.





Who should use this Activity Kit?

'Equality is Gender-Free' is designed to be read and implemented primarily for school students, although activities may be adapted for college students as well. For very young children, these activities may need to be adapted and moderated by a teacher facilitator.

The activity kit can be used in social and international studies classes, history classes, arts and literature classes, or as a stand-alone learning opportunity. It can also be used in community settings, such as school or college clubs and societies. Individual lessons can act either as stand-alone lessons or as a part of a whole semester-long series.

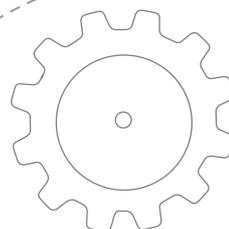
INTRODUCTION

They say that ‘boys don’t cry’ and ‘girls can’t do math’. They say that a boy needs to ‘man up’, and that ‘girls can’t drive’. When a girl is good at sports, they say, ‘she’s like a dude’, and that’s a bad thing. When a boy isn’t good at sports, they say he, ‘plays like a girl’, and that’s also a bad thing. Confused yet?

‘They’ seem to say a lot of things about boys and girls, and what they can or cannot do. But if you take a look around, you’ll find a lot of examples that prove that ‘they’ are wrong. This kit will help you understand why.

Over the next few pages, you’ll be introduced to the concept of Gender Discrimination; we’ll take a look at terminologies like Gender Identity, Gender Roles and Gender Stereotype. We’ll explore what these mean, not just in theory, but also through experience. Through a set of carefully planned activities, we will explore how deeply rooted gender discrimination is in our daily lives, how we respond to it and what can be done to curb it.

‘Equality is Gender-Free’ is designed to break down the complexity of gender-based discrimination and biases by bringing the issue out in the open and talking about how to combat it.



A Gender Mini-Dictionary



Gender and sex: The term “sex” refers to biologically determined differences, whereas “gender” refers to differences in social roles and relations. Here’s a list of terms and phrases that you will often encounter in conversations about gender:

Gender

/ˈdʒɛndə/

What a society says is the state of being a man or a woman (typically used for roles, behaviours, activities and attributes constructed by society). Gender is not another word for being a man or a woman. An individual’s gender identity may be male, female or a gender which is neither male nor female; it may also be more than one gender or no gender.

Gender Binary

/ˈdʒɛndə bɪnəri/

The idea that there are only two distinct genders: female and male.

Gender Norm

/ˈdʒɛndə nɔ:m/

An expected mode of behaving in a society based on a person’s real or perceived physical sex, or whether they are male or female. This norm shapes people’s opportunities and allows for discrimination between men and women who do not fit the model.

example - the expectation that women should be docile and passive while aggressiveness in men is considered a positive trait.

Gender Role

/ˈdʒɛndə rəʊl/

A set of societal norms (rules) dictating what types of behaviours are generally considered acceptable, appropriate or desirable for a person based on their actual or perceived sex.

example - some common gender roles include the expectation that women will care more for children while men are more responsible for the financial income of the family.

A Gender Mini-Dictionary

Gender Identity

/'dʒɛndə ɪ'dɛntɪti/

How you experience gender. Your internal, deeply felt sense of being a girl/woman, boy/man, somewhere in between, or outside these categories. It may not match the sex assigned at birth.

Gender Stereotype

/'dʒɛndə 'stɛrɪə(ʊ)tɪp/

Stereotypes are generalised assumptions made about how a person is or should be based on a particular characteristic. Gender stereotypes are assumptions made about people's value on the basis of their biological sex, sexual orientation or gender identity or expression. Stereotypes may or may not be based in fact, and can be both positive and negative.

example - "Men don't cry!"

Gender Discrimination

/'dʒɛndə dɪ'skrɪmɪ'neɪʃ(ə)n/

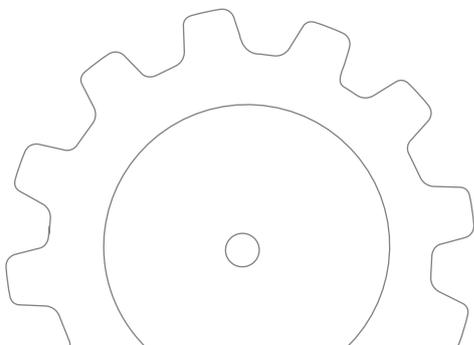
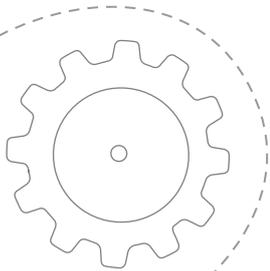
Discrimination based on a person's gender or sex, which more often affects girls and women. Because of gender discrimination, girls and women do not have the same opportunities as boys and men for education, meaningful careers, political influence, and economic advancement.

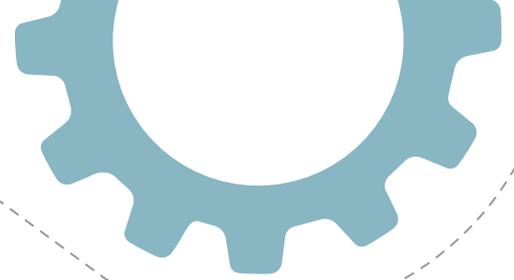
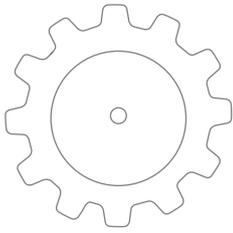
example – In many places, laws exist that make women second-class citizens. They cannot dress as they like, drive (Saudi Arabia) or work at night (China, Latvia, Madagascar).

Gender Equality

/'dʒɛndə i'kwɒlɪti/

The state in which access to rights or opportunities is unaffected by gender.





Gender and Human Rights

A Fundamental Connect

Human rights give every individual the right to be treated **equally**, regardless of where they are born, what their religious beliefs are, or whether they are rich or poor. More importantly, this right to equality is for **everyone** - the young, the old, men and women, and all others. Therefore, when anyone is treated differently because of their gender, it is gender-based discrimination, which directly challenges their human rights. Remember, any kind of discrimination, stereotype or bias that stems from preconceived gender roles, is a violation of one's human rights!

Examples of discrimination and violence on the basis of gender:

- Stereotyping (eg. Girls must play with dolls, boys must play with action figures)
- 'Eve Teasing'
- Sexual Harassment

Can you think of any other?





What's a Gender Lens?

Imagine you are wearing special glasses through which you can only see the world from the point of view of a dog. That is what you may call a dog lens. Similarly, a gender lens is when you put on your imaginary spectacles and look at the world from the point of view of how equal it is for all genders and who holds the power. Is it men or women? Does the situation change? How?

Part **1**

**UNDERSTANDING
GENDER EQUALITY**

THE GENDER DIVIDE


Age Group

12 and above



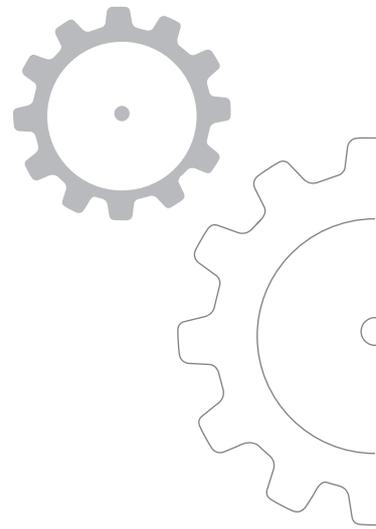
Time

1 hour 30 minutes



Aim

To define and understand the term gender inequality



INTRODUCTION:

This activity is divided into the following three parts:

Part A: Brainstorming on the notion of gender equality

Part B: Group work on the theme of gender roles in society

Part C: Group discussion on factors that affect gender equality in society

Part A



Time

15 minutes



Aim

Brainstorming – What is your understanding of the term 'gender equality'?

Directions

Appoint a facilitator who will lead a large group discussion by asking the following question: “What does gender equality mean to you?”. Ensure that each person’s opinions are heard and acknowledged.

Part B



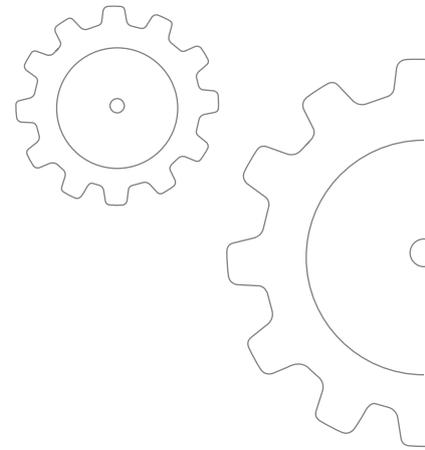
Time

35 minutes



Aim

Distinguishing between gender equality and gender inequality.



Directions

Divide the participants into two groups:

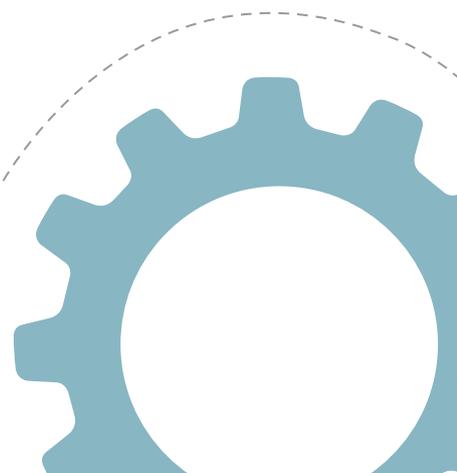
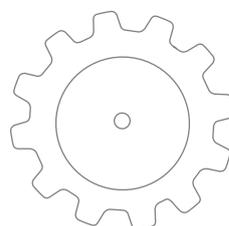
- Group 1 will focus on gender equality in society
- Group 2 will focus on gender inequality in society

Drawing from the collective experiences of the members of your group, come up with a story that illustrates the roles of men and women in your society (e.g. at home, in school, at work, in health care, in government). To help identify your story, keep in mind the different social roles played by women/girls and men/boys in our daily lives. For example, consider the division of labour at a typical home and access to or control over resources in the community.

Quickly create a play based on your story. Stick to the perspective that was assigned to your group (i.e. gender equality or gender inequality). As you watch the other group perform the play, try to identify and jot down the issues being presented.

After both groups have presented, discuss the play scenarios using the suggested questions:

- How do the scenarios compare with the actual situations in your country?
- What are some of the main gender roles highlighted in the role-play scenarios?
- What factors contributed to gender equality in the role-play?
- What factors contributed to gender inequality in the role-play?



Part C



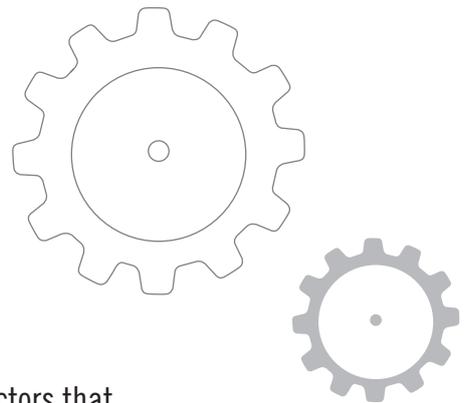
Time

40 minutes



Aim

Large group discussion

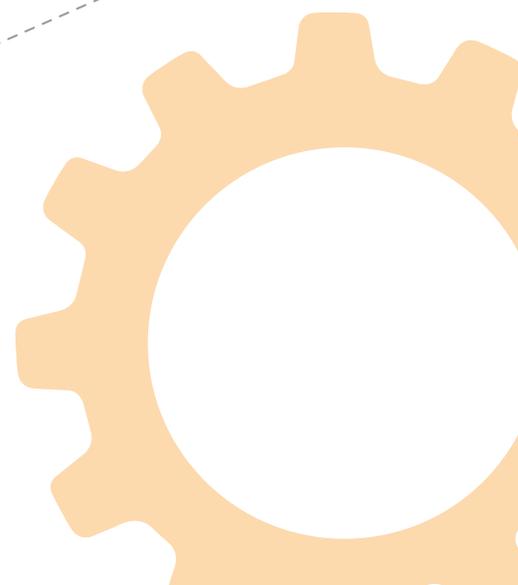


Directions

Appoint a facilitator who will lead a large group discussion on the factors that contribute to gender equality and gender inequality in society.

The following questions may be considered for the discussion:

- Can you identify the factors that have contributed to the advancement of gender equality in your country/region? (e.g. economic development, political struggles, women in development, feminist theory)
- Can you identify the factors that have sustained gender inequalities in your country/region? (e.g. cultural and traditional practices, religious beliefs, social attitudes, laws, exclusion from school)
- What are the effects of the power structures in women's and men's daily lives? (e.g. religious institutions, cultural institutions and traditions, educational institutions, government)
- How do gender relations affect your human rights work?



Part **2**

**TAKING ACTION TO BUILD
GENDER EQUALITY**

Now that you have a basic understanding about gender equality, it's time for you to TAKE ACTION!

There are many ways through which you can help to raise awareness about gender inequality and bridge the gender gap in your school and communities.

An effective way to start is to organise a Gender Equality Awareness Day in your school. This day can be celebrated on March 8, which is International Women's Day. You can also choose a different day to celebrate Gender Equality Awareness Day in your school.

Below is a sample schedule of how to organise the day. The activities listed in the schedule are from this Activity Kit. These can be adapted according to need, or you can come up with your own activities. Remember to share these with us!

GENDER EQUALITY AWARENESS DAY

Sample Schedule

ACTIVITY	DURATION
Morning Assembly → Speeches or → Musical Performance or → Guest of Honour's Speech	10 minutes 20 minutes 10 minutes
Gender Board and Poster Making All classes create a 'Gender Board' for their respective classrooms. Make posters relevant to gender issues to get your gender board started!	45 minutes
Classroom Activities Conduct the activities listed out in this kit with the relevant classes. Each activity indicates a recommended age-group.	As specified in the relevant activity
Home Work – Family Tree Middle school and high school students are briefed on the activity, which they must do at home with their parents. The Family Trees can be discussed the next day in class.	15 minutes - Day 1 60 minutes - Day 2

IDEAS FOR THE MORNING ASSEMBLY

Musical Performance



Time

5 minutes



Topic

Equality and Unity

Directions

Find a song on unity and equality (e.g. *We are the World* by Michael Jackson). Perform the song to inspire actions and evoke emotional responses.

Guest of Honour

Invite a guest of honour to speak on a certain issue regarding gender. You could call a local police officer, an NGO worker, an Officer from the Ministry of Education, etc.

Speeches



Time

5 minutes

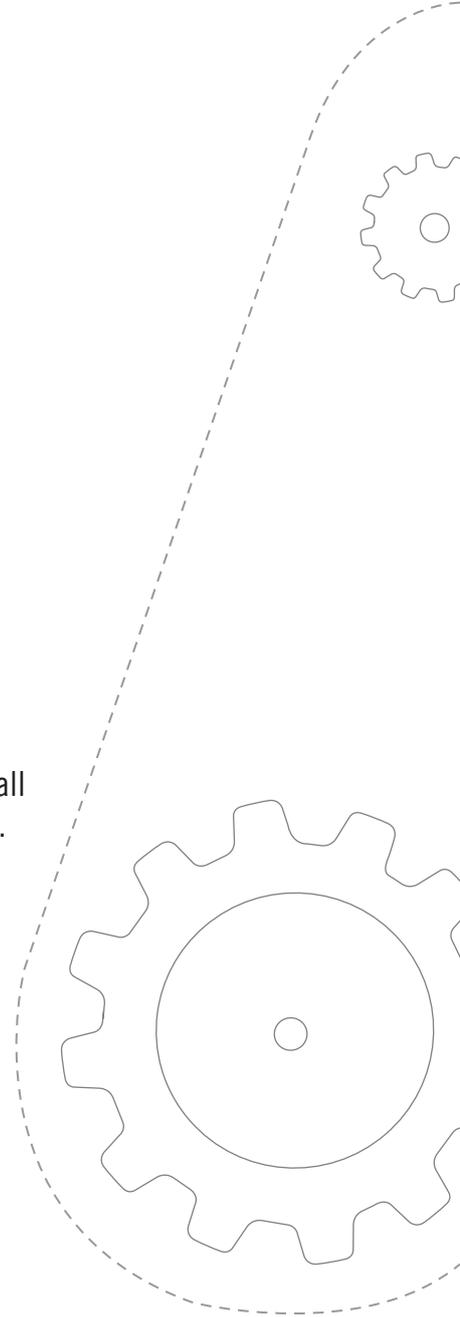


Topic

Current Affairs

Directions

Read a newspaper and write a speech on a gender issue within one of the articles. (e.g. domestic violence, dowry, street harassment.) Write a speech to inform your fellow students of the incident, the underlying problem of the issue, and why it is important for the student community to be aware and take action on issues of gender inequality.



Some points to remember while writing the speech:

- What is the human rights issue?
- Why do you think it is happening?
- What can change the situation?
- As a student, how can you make a difference?

Example:

Introduction Paragraph

Introduce the topic by citing the newspaper article and stating some key points and facts.

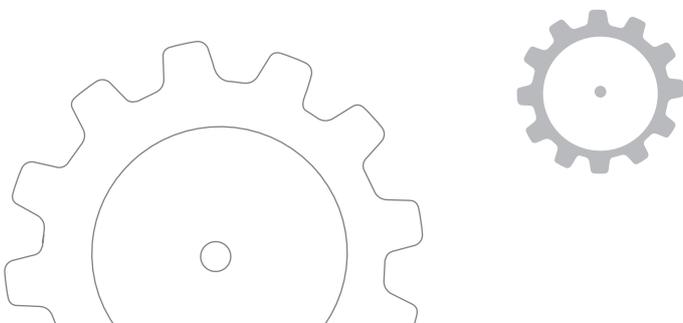
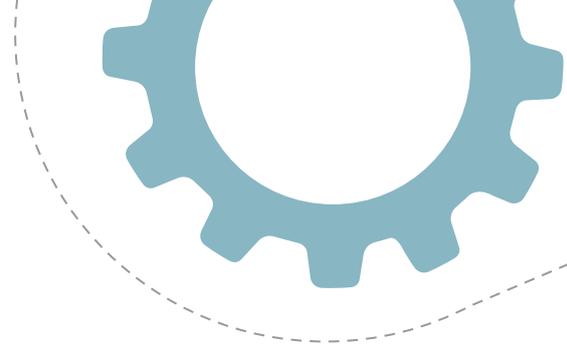
- What is the problem
- Who is it affecting
- Why is it happening

Paragraph 2

In this paragraph, discuss in detail, the key points made in your introduction. Include a list of affected regions or people. Compare the effects of the problem in different regions and list out reasons why the problem is occurring and continues to occur.

Paragraph 3

In this final paragraph, discuss your thoughts on the matter. What do you think is the biggest reason behind the issue and what are some solutions? Explain your solutions. As a student, what do you think your role could be in this matter? Conclude by briefly summarising what needs to be done in one or two sentences.



IDEAS FOR CLASSROOM ACTIVITIES

Gender Board

A Gender Board is a space to put up articles, drawings and paintings related to the gender inequality debate. Students take the responsibility of keeping their boards updated with new content throughout the year.



Age Group

For all Classes



Requirements

Designate a board/wall space in your classroom as a Gender Board. Put up posters and articles on gender awareness and issues.



Aim

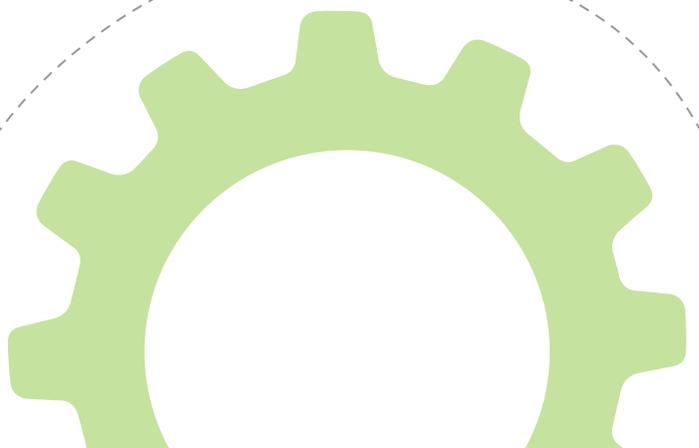
To explore social issues through a gender lens.

Directions

Poster making! Have an activity in class to make a poster which depicts a scenario related to one of the following:

- Gender stereotypes in the classroom
- Say no to street harassment
- Gender equality

Divide the class into 4 groups and give each a topic to focus on.



Story Telling


Age Group

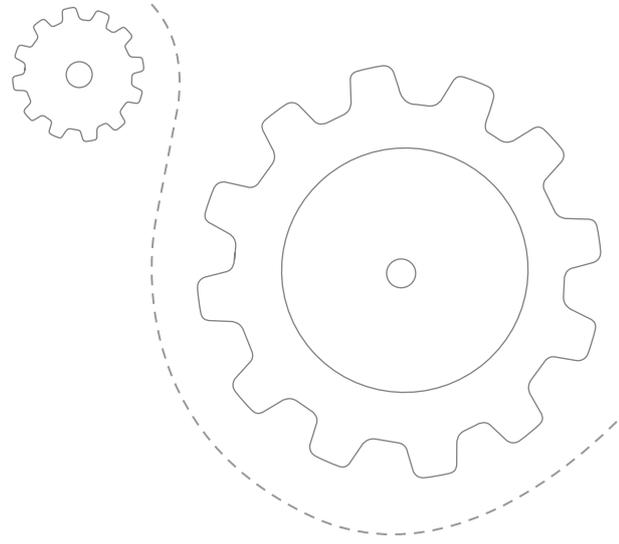
Grades 3 to 5


Time

20 + 20 minutes


Aim

To explore gender stereotypes through some common stories.



Directions

A teacher or facilitator should share the following stories with students:

Situation 1

Sachin and his friends Ali and Rahul were playing cricket in the park. Mina came along and asked Sachin if she could also play. But Ali and Rahul said, 'No, girls don't play cricket!'. Sachin knows that Mina plays very well and is better than all three boys. But he did not know what to say even though he knew Mina felt very bad.



Discussion Points

 20 minutes

Ask the students to discuss what they might have done in this situation.

Questions to consider:

- Should the boys have let Mina play with them?
- Why do you think they said 'girls can't play cricket'?
- Do you think boys are better than girls at some things? Why?

Situation 2

Varun is a student of Grade 4 and he enjoys drawing more than sports. One day during lunch break, his classmates were having a race. Varun raced with Steffi, Nina and Asha. However Varun was not very fast and came last. After that race almost all his friends (boys and girls) began to make fun of him for being so slow. The boys especially made fun of Varun for losing to the girls.



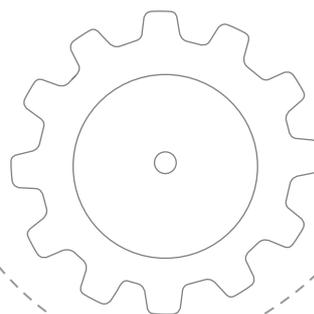
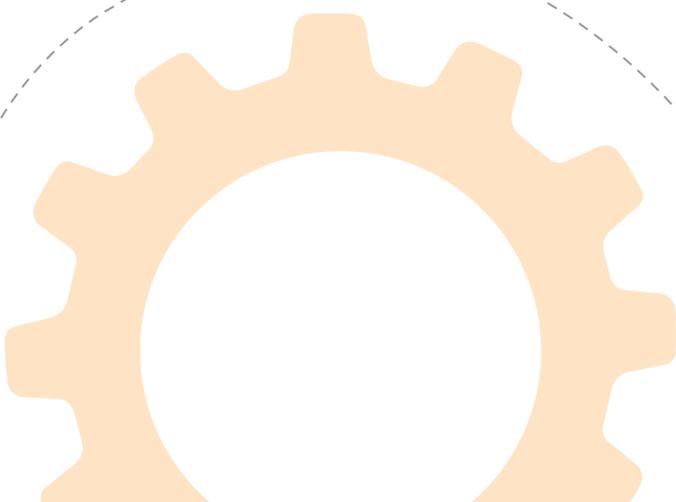
Discussion Points

🕒 20 minutes

Ask the students to discuss what they might have done in this situation.

Questions to consider:

- Do you think it is strange for Varun to not be good at sports?
- Do you think girls are not as good at sports as boys?
- Should Varun's classmates have made fun of Varun?
- Is it bad for a boy to run slower than a girl?
- Don't you think that some girls are very strong, fast and good at sports like Saina Nehwal, P.T. Usha, Mary Kom? Do you think you can run faster than them?



Problem-Solution Tree



Age Group

Grades 6 to 8



Materials

Index cards and pens



Time

45 minutes



Aim

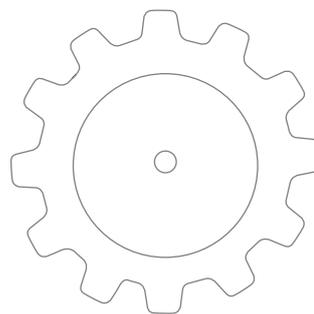
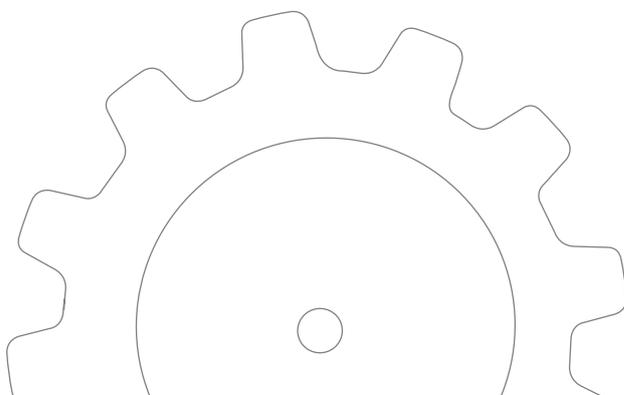
To address the issue of gender stereotypes through a problem-solution tree.

Directions

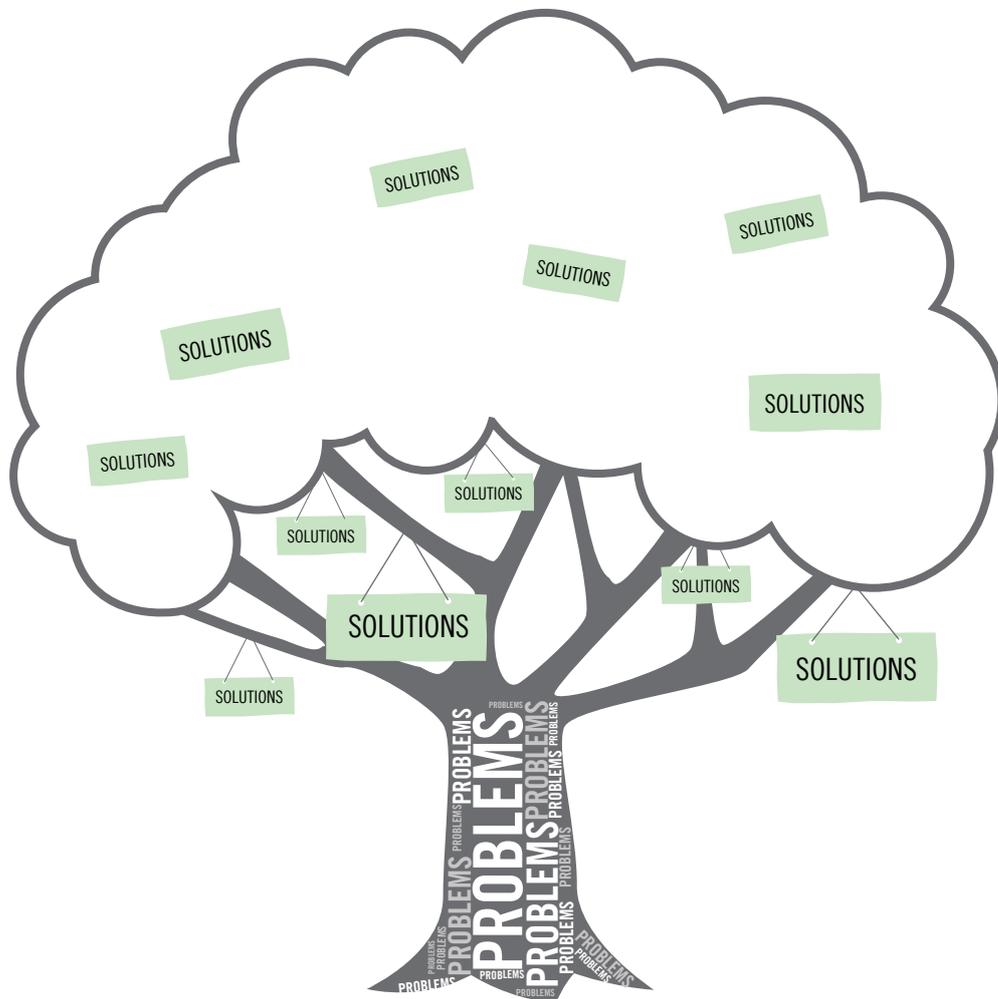
Give each student a blank card. Ask them to write down any one stereotype they find in their classroom, school and community. Be creative!

Examples:

- Girls are better at art
- Boys are better at sports
- Girls can deliver messages to teachers
- Boys can lift heavy items



Collect the cards and ask the students to pick any card and read it out, one at a time. Discuss each card and form a problem-solution tree. This can be done on a large chart paper. Paste the 'problems' in the tree trunk, and the 'solutions' can form the branches and leaves of the tree.



Discussion

🕒 Have a 2-3 minute discussion for each card.

- What is the problem (stereotype)?
- Why is it present?
- How can the students help to solve it?

Group Discussion



Age Group

Grades 9 to 12



Time

1 hour



Aim

To come up with possible gender-equal alternatives through role-playing and group discussions.

Directions

Read out each of the following scenarios to the students and have a discussion on what boys and girls think about it.



Situation 1

Divide the class into three mixed groups of boys and girls. One group represents Fiza, one group represents Raju and the third group is the “Stop” group.

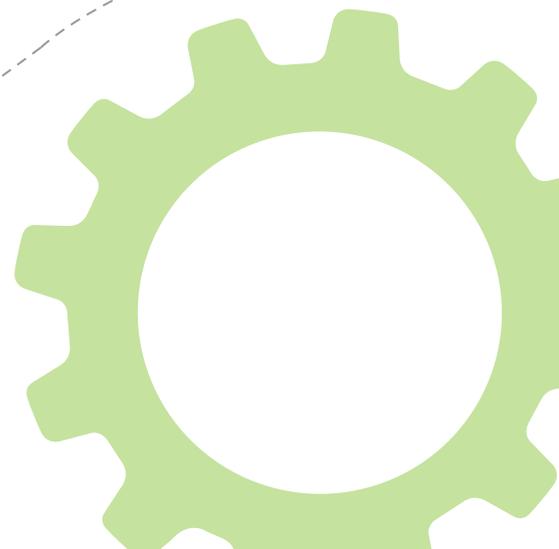
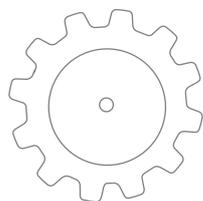
Fiza and her friends stopped at an ice-cream shop on the way back from school. Coincidentally, Raju and his friends also stopped there. Raju happened to like Fiza and treated her to an ice-cream. A few days later at the ice-cream shop, Fiza and Raju met again. This time Raju’s friends made fun of the two of them and called them a couple which Raju did not mind. However, Fiza did not like this and asked Raju to tell them to stop.

Ask Raju’s group to continue the story and discuss how Raju would react. Similarly, let Fiza’s group represent what Fiza would do or say. Continue this story for another 10 minutes till the story concludes. The “Stop” group will object when they think either Fiza or Raju’s actions are wrong. If they object, then Fiza or Raju groups will have to think of another way to proceed.



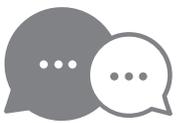
Discussion

- How to continue the story?
- What would Raju do or say?
- How would Fiza react?



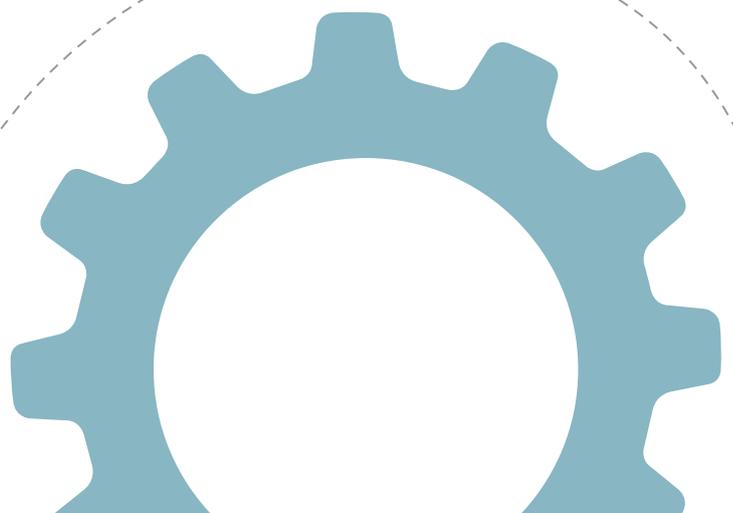
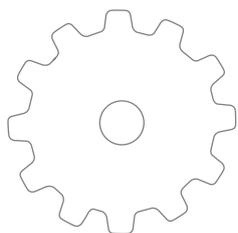
Situation 2

George is the joker of the class. He is not mean and disrespectful but manages to always make the class laugh. He is not excellent in studies but he is not bad either. One day, however, a teacher began to humiliate George for not knowing an answer to a question. The teacher began to say things like, 'You will never be successful', 'You can't even solve this?', 'You know nothing else but to make people laugh at you.' George got very emotional and began to cry.

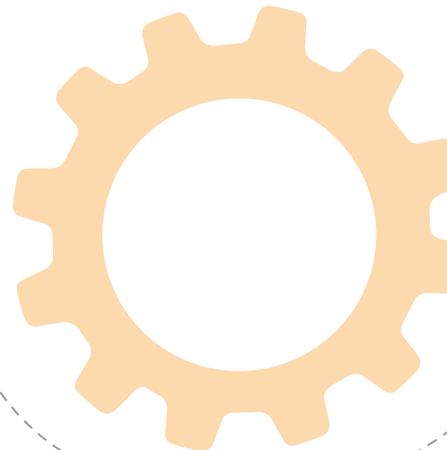


Discussion

- Discuss what you as George's classmate might have done.
- Do you think boys should cry? Yes or no, and why?
- What would you have done if George was your close friend and you saw him crying?
- If someone made fun of George for crying, would you stop them? Why or why not?



Homework - Your Family Tree




Age Group

Grades 6 to 12


Materials

Notebooks, pens


Time

1 hour 15 minutes


Aim

To identify the gender roles and professions within your family

Directions

Brief the students on the work they have to do at home with their parents:

- Work with your parents to identify all the members of your immediate and extended family.
- Next to the name of the person, write down their profession.
- Discuss the different professions in your family with your parents. Is there anyone in the family who has an unusual profession or anyone who has broken a gender-stereotype with the profession that they have chosen?
- List the reasons why you think they broke a stereotype?
- Where do these stereotypes come from?
- Why are stereotypes unhelpful?
- Have you ever broken stereotypes in your own life? Draw/write about it.
- Draw a picture with the help of your parents of a typical day in your house that showcases the roles or tasks that each of your family members have at home.

In the next class, discuss the Family Trees that have been created. Allow the students to share their insights with each other.

Send the family tree and drawing with your name, class and school to rights4edu@amnesty.org.in

Part **3**

**GENDER EQUALITY -
A PART OF SCHOOL LIFE**

Where do you stand on Gender Discrimination?



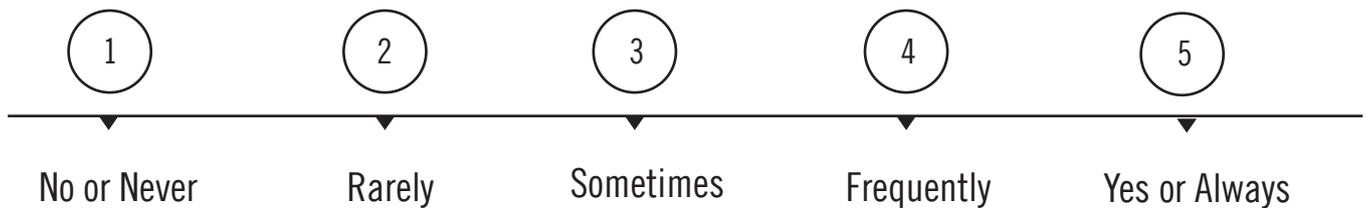
Time

10 minutes

It's not enough to just learn about gender equality - we need to make it part of our daily lives. Here's a quick and easy evaluation form to find out where you stand on the gender equality debate. Remember to be honest!

Let's take a quick quiz to see your gender equality temperature.

Rating Scale:



Are you a boy or a girl?

Boy

Girl

1 My school/ educational institute is a place where students are safe and secure.

1 2 3 4 5

2 Girls and boys form groups together during activities.

1 2 3 4 5

3 Girls participate in sports activities and physical education along with boys.

1 2 3 4 5

4 Boys participate in art and craft activities along with girls.

1 2 3 4 5

5 Boys are given tasks of delivering messages and collecting papers.

1 2 3 4 5

6 Girls are given tasks of moving tables and lifting heavy things.

1 2 3 4 5

7 Do boys tease girls in your school? (For their clothes, hair or looks)

1

2

3

4

5

8 Do girls tease boys in your school? (For their clothes, hair or looks?)

1

2

3

4

5

TOTAL SCORE:



40

Not scored too 'hot' on the gender equality scale? That's ok. Now you are aware of what needs to be done, and can work towards making small changes in everyday matters. Soon you'll be on your way to becoming a Gender Defender!

Take this test again in a couple of months to see how much you've improved.



JOIN US!

Amnesty International India
1074/B-1, First Floor, 11th Main, HAL 2nd Stage,
Indira Nagar, Bangalore, Karnataka, India - 560 008

 +91 (080) 49388000

 rights4edu@amnesty.org.in

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