

TEACHABLE BOOKS

Global Issues: Gender Equality

By Derek Acorn

GRADE LEVEL: Junior (4-6)

THEME: Global Issues

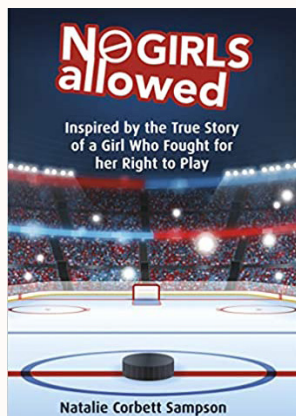
SUB-THEMES: Gender Roles,
Gender Equality

LEARNING FOCUS

This unit will use novels to connect to our current Canadian society to explore:

- Traditional gender roles and how they have evolved
- Struggles undergone by those who have challenged gender roles
- Understanding rights, equality and challenging thinking on gender roles
- Ideas around equality and education for all

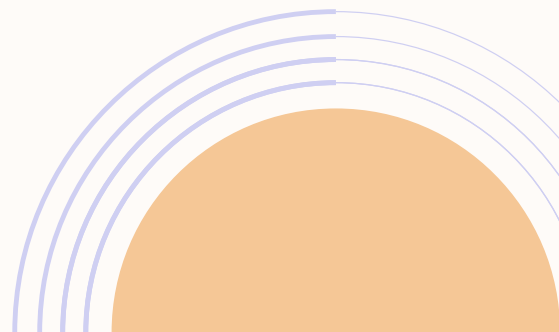
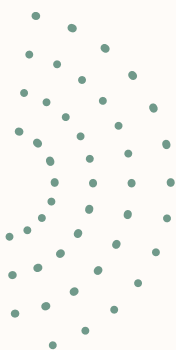
FEATURED BOOKS



No Girls Allowed: Inspired by the True Story of a Girl Who Fought for her Right to Play by Natalie Corbett Sampson (Nimbus Publishing, 2019)



Every Day is Malala Day by Rosemary McCarney (Second Story Press, 2014)



LEARNING EXPERIENCE

MINDS ON PROVOCATION

Create a slideshow of approximately 10 slides that feature photos of 10 sports, activities or tasks. Examples could be football, baking, fixing a car, etc.

Give each student a chart with column headings of “boys,” “girls” and “both” and rows that feature the names of the chosen photos. Have students privately fill out the chart as they observe the photos to indicate whether they think the photo represents a boy activity, a girl activity or both. Alternatively, students could silently reflect on their answers instead of recording them on paper.

Have a second slideshow of 5-10 slides prepared that show photos of girls performing traditionally male activities and photos of boys performing traditionally female activities.

Ask students to reflect back to the answers on their charts by posing the question, “Are there boy activities and girl activities?” Move on to asking, “Should there be boy activities and girl activities?”

Give students time to discuss the following questions using the think-pair-share strategy:

- Do you know of any things that boys weren’t allowed to do in the past?
- Do you know of any things that girls weren’t allowed to do in the past?
- Do you know of any things that either boys or girls are still not allowed to do today?
- What does the word “equal” mean to you?

READ, PLAN, AND PRACTICE

Students will read “No Girls Allowed” individually, as a book club or as a read-aloud by the teacher. Several weeks should be allowed for this unit to give enough time to read the novel and complete the associated activities in the sections that follow.

The teacher should also use “Every Day is Malala Day” as a read-aloud to serve as a non-fiction companion text to “No Girls Allowed.”

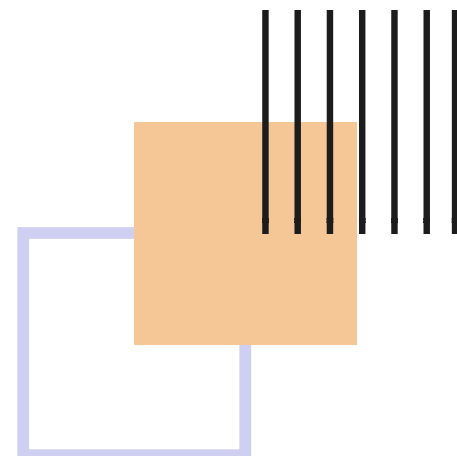
COMPARING

Compare and contrast the story in “No Girls Allowed” to the story in “Every Day is Malala Day” using a tool such as a Venn diagram. Discuss with the class what is similar and different about the stories presented in these books.

Questions to Consider

These questions can be used by the teacher as whole group discussion questions or they can be assigned as reflection questions to be answered in the style of written journal entries or oral responses using a tool such as [Flipgrid](#).

- How would you feel if you weren’t allowed to pursue your favourite activity because of your gender, like Tina?



- How could you support someone like Tina or Malala if you were their brother or sister?
- Do you think girls should be allowed to play on boys teams? Do you think boys should be allowed to play on girls teams?
- Are things the same for boys and girls in countries around the world? Are they equal everywhere?

EXTENSION

Have students complete a short research assignment on a person who has made a change related to gender equality in Canada.

Examples of people could include: Nellie McClung, Angela James, Kay Livingstone, Gwen Lord, Huberte Gautreau, Bertha Allen and Helen Armstrong.

Examples of inquiry questions could include:

- What change did the person want to make?
- What inspired them to make the change?
- How did they work to create the change they wanted?
- What is the lasting impact of their work?

MAKE, TINKER, AND MODIFY

Give students the opportunity to continue developing their understanding of gender equality and to communicate their understanding in one of the following ways. Alternatively, they could propose their own idea if they have an option that is not listed below that they are passionate about.

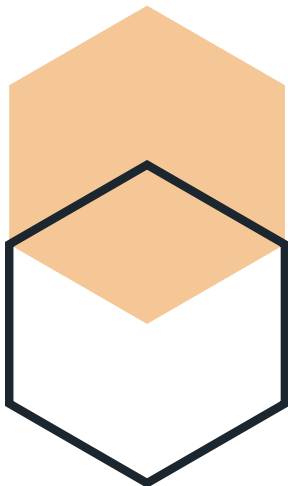
Artwork: Create a piece of art that educates others about an issue of gender equality.

Gender Equality Today: Research and communicate about a current gender equality issue. Use a poster, a podcast or a video to communicate the issue and what can be done to help your school community or the world at large.

Letter: Write a letter to an elected official or organization that you think can help with an issue of gender equality. Explain the issue and give suggestions on changes you would like to see happen.

Website: Create a collective website as a class with each student, or small groups of students, creating subpages dedicated to different gender equality issues they care about.

Here are some [Creative Tools for Making and Sharing](#).

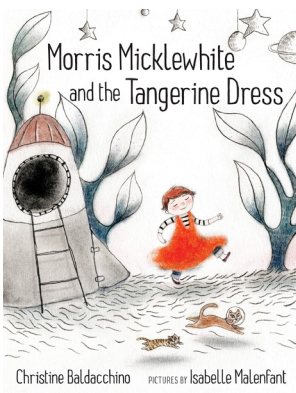


REFLECT AND CONNECT

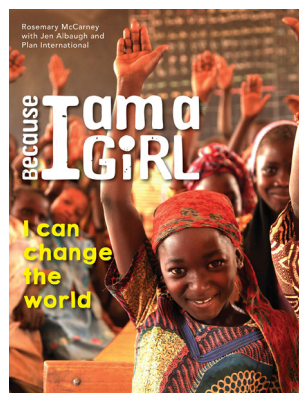
Refer back to the Learning Focus for this study, and get students to reflect either in writing or orally on a site such as [Flipgrid](#) about the following ideas:

- What does gender equality mean to you?
- What did you learn about gender equality through our work?
- How has gender equality changed over time?
- Are all genders treated equally today?
- How have people challenged gender roles and gender equality?

ADDITIONAL CANADIAN BOOKS AND BOOK LISTS TO SUPPORT THESE SUB-THEMES



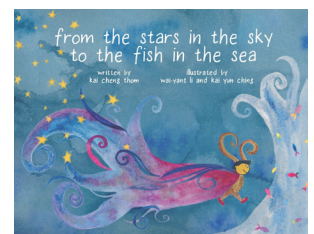
Morris Micklewhite and the Tangerine Dress by Christine Baldacchino, illustrated by Isabelle Malenfant (Groundwood Books, 2014)



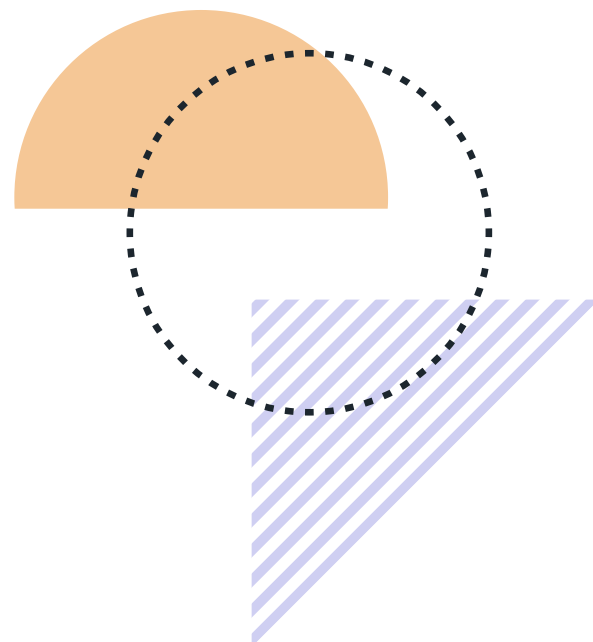
Because I Am a Girl: I can change the world by Rosemary McCarney, with Plan International (Second Story Press, 2014)



As a Boy by Plan International (Second Story Press, 2016)



From the Stars in the Sky to the Fish in the Sea by Kai Cheng Thom, illustrated by Wai-Yant Li and Kai Yun Ching (Arsenal Pulp Press, 2017)



BOOK LISTS

Topic-based [annotated book list](#) that highlights different world issues by the Canadian Children's Book Centre.

ADAPTATIONS FOR PRIMARY (K-2)

Use the picture book “Morris Micklewhite and the Tangerine Dress” by Christine Baldacchino (Groundwood Books, 2014) instead of the novel.

Minds On Provocation activity can still be used, but reduce the amount of slides and use whole group discussion with simplified questions.

- Before reading, share the front cover of the book and ask students what they notice about the cover and what they think the book might be about.
- Use the following questions as prompts while you are reading the book: How is Morris treated by the other children when he wears the dress? How does Morris feel when he wears the dress?
- After reading the book, have students share with a partner or with the whole group something that makes them happy. Have students make a picture, journal entry or piece of art about the thing that makes them happy. Share and celebrate the students' creations.
- Have students reflect either through group discussion, in writing or using a website such as [Flipgrid](#) about the following questions: Should everyone get to be themselves? Does everyone have to wear the same clothes and like the same things?

MORE RESOURCES

- [Plan International Canada](#) is a member of a global organization dedicated to advancing children's rights and equality for girls
- Canadian Women's Foundation: [statistics on gender equality](#)
- Government of Canada: [advancing gender equality](#)
- Canadian School Libraries Journal: [Making Read-Alouds Purposeful](#) - Deborah McCallum discusses the potential of designing learning experiences to connect informational texts with narrative texts to build content knowledge and vocabulary in authentic and engaging ways.