

1. International Women's Day

This week's lesson touches on some of the issues surrounding International Women's Day, which is celebrated every year on 8th March in many countries around the world.

Level

Upper intermediate and above (equivalent to CEF level B2 and above)

How to use the lesson

1. Presuming issues of discrimination are not too sensitive to be raised in your class, introduce the concept of discrimination and ask the students what forms of discrimination exist in the world. What examples of gender/sex discrimination can they think of? Would they say that gender discrimination is decreasing (in the world as a whole, and/or in their country)? How is the situation today different from one hundred years ago?
2. Give your students between five and ten minutes to read through Worksheet A, encouraging them to look up new vocabulary. Note, however, that many of the words that might be new are not in the glossary because they form part of Exercise 1.
3. Give each student a copy of Worksheet B, then divide the class into pairs and ask students to work together to do Exercise 1, in which they have to find the words to match the definitions. You may wish to point out that some of the words may be in a different form in the text (a different verb tense, for example).
4. Check answers in open class.
5. Ask the students to turn over their copies of Worksheet A or to give them back to you temporarily. Then, keeping the students in their pairs, hand out Worksheet C and ask them to move on to Exercise 2, in which one word has been omitted from each line of the text. With no indication of what the words were, or any gaps to show exactly where they have been taken from, how many of the words can the students remember and replace? This is not a test of memory alone, however: the students should be able to draw on their grammatical and lexical knowledge, and you should also point out that both the glossary and the students' correct answers to Exercise 1, on Worksheet B, should be of some use. Award a point for each word that is correctly replaced. (You could perhaps award half a point if the students come up with a word that fits the sentence but is not actually the original word.)
6. Check answers in open class.

Answers:

Exercise 1

1. gender 2. discrimination 3. handful 4. press for 5. devote (yourself) to
6. significant 7. domestic 8. high-profile 9. mark 10. draw attention to
11. appreciation 12. protest 13. dependent 14. hold; held 15. unthinkable

Exercise 2

1. were 2. since 3. European 4. have 5. have 6. for 7. about 8. of
9. similarities 10. in 11. the 12. events 13. against 14. unthinkable 15. vote
16. where 17. parliament 18. women 19. devoting 20. lower 21. little 22. on
23. inequality 24. attention 25. same 26. girls 27. fewer 28. years 29. alongside
30. office 31. significant 32. Finnish 33. than 34. country 35. such 36. and

2. Related websites

Send your students to these websites, or just take a look yourself.

www.internationalwomensday.com

The official website of International Women's Day.

<http://uk.reuters.com/subjects/international-womens-day-2011>

A collection of articles from Reuters on events surrounding International Women's Day 2011.

http://www.bbc.co.uk/worldservice/trust/indepth/international_womens_day_2011.shtml

Articles related to International Women's Day 2011 from the BBC World Service website.