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Final Project for Speak Better: Increasing Student Discourse in the English Language Learning Classroom

I am modifying my unit on **Women's Day** to make it more student-centered and to include more opportunities for oral discourse.

The overarching question for my unit is:

Why do we need to continue celebrating Women's Day?

My three content learning targets are:

1. I can identify the need to celebrate Women's Day and provide 3 examples of situations where women are at a disadvantage.
2. I can identify 2 women who are empowering women.
3. I can explain the glass ceiling metaphor and provide one example.

My three language learning targets are:

1. I can express and defend an opinion.
2. I can make questions for an interview.
3. I can identify and use metaphors to enrich their oral and written work.

Three driving questions I can show my students to model how to write driving questions are:

1. Who are women role models in your life? Why?
2. Write 10 questions in order to interview a woman you admire.
3. What does the expression "glass ceiling" mean?

An oral discourse protocol or activity that I will use to build background knowledge or introduce the topic is: (explain the activity and provide a question to be used in your unit)

Inner/outer circle: Students stand facing each other in two circles, one inside the other. The students in the inner circle talk about a woman they admire and why. Then the students in the outer circle paraphrase what they have heard to check they have understood their partners' ideas. Next the students in the outer circle answer the question and the students in the inner circle paraphrase.

Prompt: Choose a woman you admire and tell why you admire her.

Academic conversations are sustained, purposeful conversations about school topics.
(Zwiers, p.1)

Two benefits of academic conversations are:

1. Allow students to build up their academic vocabulary and use it in a meaningful way
2. Allow for students to share their knowledge and understanding of syntax before tackling written work.

The five communication skills practiced during academic conversations are:

1. Clarifying
2. Paraphrasing
3. Agreeing and disagreeing
4. Building on
5. Summarizing

Explain the paraphrase card activity:

Students are given an index card to paraphrase in writing what their partners have answered on a given question.

A question for the paraphrase card activity is:

What does the expression “glass ceiling” mean?

I would provide this list of words or expressions to support my students during the speaking activity:

1. Metaphor
2. Promotion/ to be promoted
3. Invisible barrier
4. Discrimination
5. Managerial positions
6. Opinion language:

It seems to me that ...

I am of the opinion that .../ I take the view that ..

My personal view is that ...

As far as I understand / can see, ...

As I see it, ... / From my point of view ...

As far as I know ... / From what I know ...

I might be wrong but ...

If I am not mistaken ...

I believe one can (safely) say ...

It is claimed that ...

I must admit that ...

I cannot deny that ...

I think/believe/suppose ...

Personally, I think ...

That is why I think ...

An authentic text that I would use during this unit with my students to build background knowledge is:

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOAL 5

Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls

PROGRESS OF GOAL 5 IN 2017

Gender inequality persists worldwide, depriving women and girls of their basic rights and opportunities. Achieving gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls will require more vigorous efforts, including legal frameworks, to counter deeply rooted gender-based discrimination that often results from patriarchal attitudes and related social norms.

- On the basis of data from 2005 to 2016 for 87 countries, 19 per cent of women between 15 and 49 years of age said they had experienced physical and/or sexual violence by an intimate partner in the 12 months prior to the survey. In the most extreme cases, such violence can lead to death. In 2012, almost half of all women who were victims of intentional homicide worldwide were killed by an intimate partner or family member, compared to 6 per cent of male victims.
- Child marriage is declining, but not fast enough. Around 2000, nearly 1 in 3 women between 20 and 24 years of age reported that they were married before 18 years of age. Around 2015, the ratio was just over 1 in 4. The decline is driven by an even steeper reduction in the marriage rate among girls under 15 years of age during that period.
- The harmful practice of female genital mutilation/cutting has declined by 24 per cent since around 2000. Nevertheless, prevalence remains high in some of the 30 countries with representative data. In those countries, survey data from around 2015 indicate that more than 1 in 3 girls between 15 and 19 years of age have undergone the procedure compared to nearly 1 in 2 girls around 2000.
- The average amount of time spent on unpaid domestic and care work is more than threefold higher for women than men, according to survey data from 83 countries and areas. Available data indicate that time spent on domestic chores accounts for a large proportion of the gender gap in unpaid work.
- Globally, women's participation in single or lower houses of national parliaments reached 23.4 per cent in 2017, just 10 percentage points higher than in 2000. Such slow progress suggests that stronger political commitment and more ambitious measures and quotas are needed to boost women's political participation and empowerment.
- Women are still underrepresented in managerial positions. In the majority of the 67 countries with data from 2009 to 2015, fewer than a third of senior- and middle-management positions were held by women.
- Just over half (52 per cent) of women between 15 and 49 years of age who are married or in union make their own decisions about consensual sexual relations and use of contraceptives and health services. That statistic is based on available data from around 2012 for 45 countries, 43 of which are in developing regions.

Source: Report of the Secretary-General, "Progress towards the Sustainable Development Goals", [E/2017/66](#)

One protocol I would use to get students to talk about this text is The World Café.

Teacher writes five questions on 5 separated posters which are posted on different parts of the room. The class is divided into 5 groups, each group starts at a poster answering and talking about the question proposed. After a few minutes everybody but one rotates and goes to a different poster. The person who stays behind summarizes what the previous group has said and asks for more input from the new group. Then somebody else stays behind to summarize what has been said and the groups rotate again.

I am going to use the targets proposed by the UN for goal number 5 on Gender Equality. So the questions which I am going to write on the posters are:

1. How can we help eliminate harmful practices, such as child, early and forced marriage and female genital mutilation?
2. Have you seen or heard about any cases of violence against women? What policies can be made in order to stop violence against women?
3. On average, women do 3 times as much unpaid care and domestic work as men. Think about your family: Who does which domestic chores?
4. How can we empower all women and girls?
5. How can we ensure women's full and effective participation and equal opportunities for leadership at all levels in life?

To have my students show a relationship between characters, setting or events in the text, they could use these words (list 7-10) and these symbols (list 3).

- Gender equality
- To empower / empowerment
- Patriarchal attitudes
- Violence against women
- Managerial positions
- Domestic chores
- Child marriage
- +
- -
- =

A Newsela article I could use in my unit to differentiate reading for my students is

<https://newsela.com/articles/fearless-girl-statue/id/28677/>.



In class, I would:

Give students a copy of the article using two levels, the highest level and one intermediate. Students get a sticky and in groups they:

1. Rank three main ideas in the text.
2. Explain the metaphor behind the statue.

Five possible final products that my students could create are:

For higher levels:

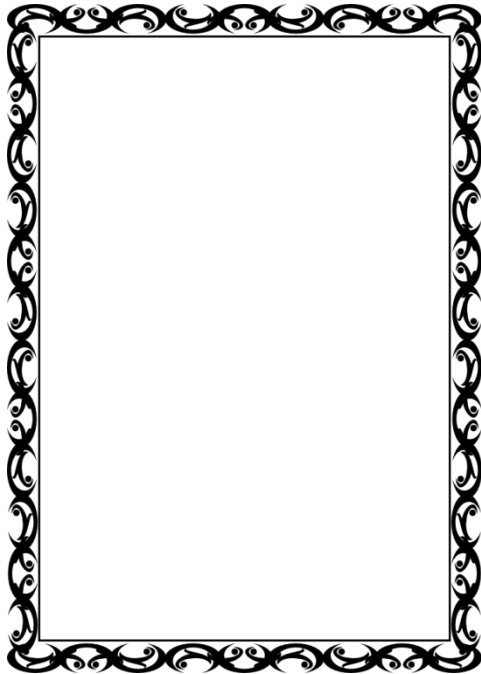
1. **A TED Talk:** a 2-3 min speech on one of these subtopics
 - a woman who has influenced you or a woman you admire
 - the need to celebrate Women's Day
 - how to empower girls
 - the need for breaking the glass ceiling
2. **A panel discussion of women** if possible of different ages talking about their experiences and their opinions on gender equality. Students will conduct this discussion. They must also research to find possible guests. Students should check with the Woman Department in their townhall, with the group of the police in charge of domestic violence, with authors who have written about the topic, with women from other countries, etc.
3. **A debate** on the topic: **Quotas for women are necessary.** This will be done with students who are in 4th ESO and participate in the activity Public Speaking.

For lower levels:

4. **An exhibition of dolls each holding a message** which breaks a stereotype. For example: I like to play football, I am going to be an engineer, crying is not a girl thing ...

5. **A gallery of admirable women-** Students are given a sheet of purple paper with a border, something like the one below. In it they must glue the picture of the woman they admire and write a little paragraph explaining why they admire her.

I admire _____ because _____.



Then all the pieces of purple paper are placed on a big continuous piece of black paper as if they were paintings on a wall. If you want to work with other departments the messages can be written in different languages.

Another activity I would use to provide oral discourse practice is: (provide name of activity, explain the activity and write a question to be used in the activity)

GoGoMo: Students are given a piece of paper with 9 boxes

Prompt: Write the name of one woman who has contributed to empower women.

| | | |
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Students write her name and what she did in a box. Then they go around the class asking other students about other women and filling in the chart with the information provided by their classmates until they have completed the nine boxes. As a follow-up activity students can discuss in groups of 4 who they think are the 3 most important women from the ones they have in their charts.

A student-engaged formative assessment that I would use during this unit is:

Graphs, visuals, research to text

Students in groups of 4 will create a poster explaining the problem they have been given using the material provided by the teacher. This is a great opportunity to talk about reliable sources and interpret information. For example, we can find materials for Violence Against Women in the following web pages. Teacher will provide just the necessary information in order not to overwhelm the students.

- 1) Violence against Women

<https://data.oecd.org/inequality/violence-against-women.htm#indicator-chart>

<http://us.breakthrough.tv/resources/13-reasons-why-we-must-drive-the-culture-change-needed-to-make-violence-against-women-unacceptable/>

<https://www.usnews.com/news/best-countries/articles/2016-10-20/violence-against-women-in-5-charts>

- 2) Glass ceiling
- 3) Child Marriage
- 4) Domestic chores
- 5) Female Genital Mutilation

A summative oral assessment for this unit that I would use is:

The TED Talks could be used as a summative oral assessment. We can use the Praise, Question and Suggest protocol before the students present in front of the class.

I would use this rubric to measure how the students met the learning targets: (include prompts or a chart)

Content Learning Targets

| Student can | Completely, Without hesitation | Partially, Needs some more information | Not yet, missing important info |
|--|--------------------------------|--|---------------------------------|
| identify the need to celebrate Women's Day and provide 3 examples of situations where women are at a disadvantage. | | | |
| identify 2 women who are empowering women | | | |
| Students can explain the glass ceiling metaphor and provide one example | | | |

Language Learning Targets

| Student can | Completely, Without hesitation | Partially | Not yet |
|--|--------------------------------|-----------|---------|
| express and defend an opinion | | | |
| make questions for an interview | | | |
| identify and use metaphors to enrich their oral and written work | | | |