

Education for Women



Clements Library,
Women in History Internet
Exhibition
<http://www.clements.umich.edu>

Study after study has taught us that there is no tool more effective for national development than the empowerment of women.

Former United Nations Secretary General Kofi Annan

The best judge of whether or not a country is going to develop is how it treats its women. If it's educating its girls, if women have equal rights, that country is going to move forward. But if women are oppressed and abused and illiterate, then they're going to fall behind.

President Barack Obama

Lesson Plan: Education for Women

Subject Social Studies
Grades 6-12
Time Frame Two to four days, teachers can modify activities to meet grade and time requirements

Curriculum Ties Examine women's education while discussing the Era of Good Feelings, the Suffrage Movement, the Victorian and Progressive eras, and global issues/problems of the 21st century; use elements of this lesson for project-based learning during Women's History Month (March) or Human Rights Month (December)

Lesson Abstract

Students (1) examine the history of women's education in the United States and Louisiana and (2) investigate the contemporary global significance of educating the women of the world. We suggest that after students explore online artifacts related to the history of education for women, they visit the Mansfield Female College Museum in Mansfield, LA—the oldest female college west of the Mississippi River.

Louisiana Content Standards

- H-1A-M2 demonstrating historical perspective through the WW I social and economic context in which an event or idea occurred
- H-1A-M4 analyzing historical data using primary and secondary sources
- H-1A-H2 explaining and analyzing events, ideas, and issues within a historical context
- H-1A-H3 interpreting and evaluating the historical evidence presented in primary and secondary sources
- H-1A-H4 utilizing knowledge of facts and concepts drawn from history and methods of historical inquiry to analyze historical and contemporary issues

Objectives

Students will

- Read for understanding
- Work with their peers to conduct historical research, using a variety of textual and Internet resources
- Work with their peers to research contemporary issues, using a variety of textual and Internet resources
- Compare and contrast historical and contemporary issues by preparing a Venn diagram
- Organize and present information to their peers, using appropriate technology and oral presentation guidelines

Materials

- [Why Is It Important to Educate the Women of the World?](#) activity sheet
- [Education for Women: Historical Overview](#)
- [Education for Women Venn Diagram](#)
- [Women's Education Evolves: 1790-1890 Student Project](#) sheet
- [Women's Education Evolves: 1790-1890 Note-Taking Guide](#)
- [Educating the Women of the World Student Project](#) sheet
- [Educating the Women of the World Note-Taking Guide](#)
- [Multimedia Storyboard](#)
- [Multimedia Rubric](#)
- Clements Historical Library Internet exhibition, www.clements.umich.edu/womened/index.html

Pre-lesson Preparations

1. Make copies of
 - [Why Is It Important to Educate the Women of the World?](#) activity sheet
 - [Education for Women: Historical Overview](#)
 - [Education for Women Venn Diagram](#)
2. Decide if students will conduct research into the history of education for women. Make appropriate copies of
 - [Women's Education Evolves: 1790-1890 Student Project](#) sheet
 - [Women's Education Evolves: 1790-1890 Note-Taking Guide](#)
 - [Multimedia Storyboard](#)
 - [Multimedia Rubric](#)
3. Decide if students will conduct research into the global status of education for women in the 21st century. Make appropriate copies of contemporary
 - [Educating the Women of the World Student Project](#) sheet
 - [Educating the Women of the World Note-Taking Guide](#)
 - [Multimedia Storyboard](#)
 - [Multimedia Rubric](#)

Lesson Procedures

1. To introduce the lesson, read the following statistics to students:

Two-thirds of the world's 880 million illiterate adults are women. Girls are more than 70 percent of the 125 million children who don't have a school to attend. Significantly, more girls than boys enrolled in the first grade fail to complete the first cycle of primary school.

World Education and Development Fund,
<http://www.worldfund.org/>

2. Ask students why they think that globally fewer girls than boys have access to education. Write their suggestions on the board. At the end of the discussion, read the following extract from the UNICEF Internet site, <http://www.unicef.org>, and compare to student responses.

Globally, why do fewer girls than boys have access to education?

Girls are less likely to get an education or stay in school than boys for many reasons, including discrimination and household duties. When money is scarce, parents tend to place greater value on educating their sons, who are assumed to be the future breadwinners of the family. Girls are often expected to contribute more than boys to household chores and upkeep. This makes the high cost of enrolling girls in school—combined with the loss of valuable help at home—not “worth it” to many poor families.

Additionally, many schools are not sensitive to gender issues. A scarcity of female teachers, a lack of bathroom facilities and a tolerance of sexual harassment make many parents reluctant to send their daughters to school. Concerns about safety also keep girls at home, especially in rural areas, where they may have to walk up to 10 miles just to reach the classroom.

In many areas of the world, families expect daughters to marry at a young age. In such cases, household and childrearing responsibilities are more important than education.

UNICEF, <http://www.unicef.org>

3. Distribute the [Why Is It Important to Educate the Women of the World?](#) activity sheet. Ask students to read the quotes and extracts and, according to these international leaders, determine why educating the women and young girls of the world is important. Ask students to discuss their findings, including their opinions of the quotes/extracts.

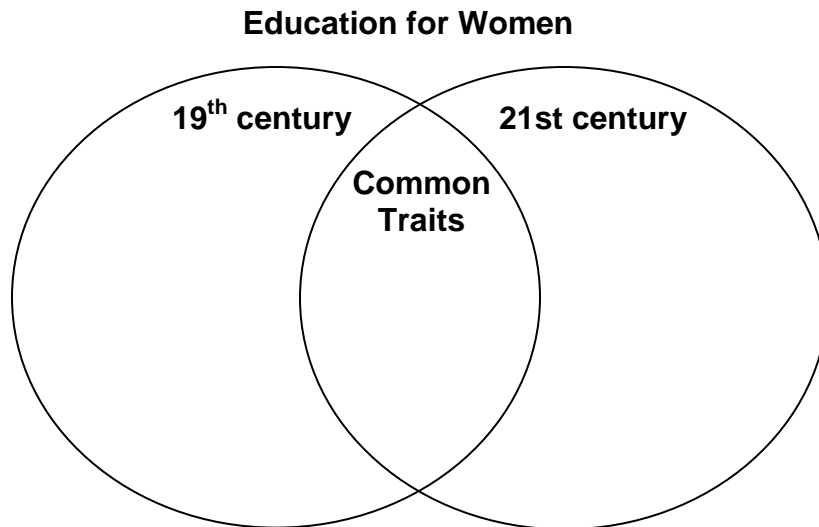
Suggested Response/Summary of Quotes

Educating girls can raise economic productivity, lower infant and maternal mortality, improve nutrition and promote health (including the prevention of HIV/AIDS), and increase the likelihood of education in subsequent generations.

4. Explain that the class will examine the history of education for women in 19th century United States and Louisiana. Among the significant 19th century Louisiana colleges for

women were Mansfield Female College in Mansfield (1855-1930), Silliman Female Collegiate Institute in Clinton (1852-1931, located east of the Mississippi River), and Keatchie Female College in Keatchie (1857-1917, located northwest of Mansfield). Like most female colleges, these three institutions were operated by religious organizations, although they accepted students of all faiths. Methodists founded Mansfield, Silliman was founded by Presbyterians, and Keatchie was a Baptist college.

5. Distribute copies of the [Education for Women: Historical Overview](#) reading and [Education for Women Venn Diagram](#). Ask students to work with their partner to compare and contrast 19th century education for women and young girls with contemporary educational opportunities for women. Make certain students understand the process involved in creating a Venn diagram.



6. Following the activity, guide a whole-class discussion of student thoughts concerning the similarities and differences between 19th and 21st century education for women.
7. Ask students to think about why there are more and diverse educational opportunities for women in the 21st century than existed in the 19th century. Write their ideas on the board, encouraging them to think about the political, social, economic, and legal reasons for the change (19th amendment, suffrage movement, Progressive Era reforms, World War I and II increased economic opportunities for women, working women demanded political reforms, women held political offices and introduced significant social and political reforms, etc).
8. **Optional Research Activity** Women's Education Evolves: 1790-1890. Students use historical artifacts—including diaries, journals, photos, textbooks, and letters—housed in the Clements Historical Library Internet exhibition, www.clements.umich.edu/womened/index.html, to gain insight into the thoughts and daily life of students as well as the educational practices that were common among 19th century women's colleges. Each group will create a multimedia presentation or visual presentation (two-slide minimum, three-slide maximum).
 - a. Divide the class into six groups, and assign each group a topic to investigate.

Topics:

 - Colonial Heritage

- Female Curriculum
 - Student Life
 - Teaching
 - Religion, Race, Culture
 - Academies & Seminaries
- b. Distribute copies of [Women's Education Evolves: 1790-1890 Student Project](#) sheet and [Women's Education Evolves: 1790-1890 Note-Taking Guide](#). Explain the project guidelines and ask students to record important research facts on the note-taking guide.
 - c. Distribute the [Multimedia Storyboard](#) and [Multimedia Rubric](#) worksheets. Discuss the guidelines for student presentations and ask students to use the Multimedia Storyboard to plan their presentation. Explain that students should limit their presentations to three minutes; the slideshow must contain a minimum of two and a maximum of three slides.
 - d. Before students make presentations, you may want to place all six slideshows into one PowerPoint presentation to avoid the disruption of opening and closing multiple presentations.
9. **Optional Research Activity** Educating the Women of the World. Students work in groups, exploring one region of the world per group, to investigate international policies and practices concerning educational opportunities for women and explore how these policies shape the future of nations. Each group will create a multimedia presentation or visual presentation (two-slide minimum, three-slide maximum).
- a. Divide the class into six groups, and assign each group a topic to investigate.
Topics:
 - South America
 - East Asia: China, Japan, Korea
 - India and Southeast Asia
 - Sub-Saharan Africa
 - Middle East and North Africa
 - North America
 - b. Distribute copies of [Educating the Women of the World Student Project](#) sheet and [Educating the Women of the World Note Taking-Guide](#). Explain the project guidelines and ask students to record important research facts on the note-taking guide.
 - c. Distribute the [Multimedia Storyboard](#) and [Multimedia Rubric](#) worksheets. Discuss the guidelines for student presentations and ask students to use the Multimedia Storyboard to plan their presentation. Explain that students should limit their presentations to three minutes; the slideshow must contain a minimum of two and a maximum of three slides.
 - d. Before students make presentations, you may want to place all six slideshows into one PowerPoint presentation to avoid the disruption of opening and closing multiple presentations.

Assessment

- [Why Is It Important to Educate the Women of the World?](#) activity sheet
- [Education for Women Venn Diagram](#)

- [Women's Education Evolves: 1790-1890 Note-Taking Guide](#)
- [Educating the Women of the World Note-Taking Guide](#)
- [Multimedia Storyboard](#)
- [Multimedia Rubric](#)