Girls’ Education Fact Sheet

- An estimated 130 million girls globally, between the ages of six and 17, are not attending school, and 15 million primary-school aged girls will never attend school in their life. (UNESCO/World Bank)
- Only 39 percent of girls living in rural areas around the world attend secondary school, compared to 45 percent of boys. (United Nations)
- Child marriage is a key barrier to girls’ education. An estimated 41,000 girls under 18 are forced to marry every day, almost always ending their school career. (World Bank)
- For every 1,000 women, each additional year of schooling they receive as girls reduces the number who will die in childbirth by two. (Population Reference Bureau)
- The average level of education women receive in a country is a key factor in the survival rate of children in that country. (United Nations)
- A child born to a mother who is able to read is 50 percent more likely to survive past the age of five than a child who is born to an illiterate mother. (Population Reference Bureau)
- A study of women in Zambia found that HIV/AIDS spreads twice as fast in communities where girls do not receive an education. (Kungsholmens Gymnasium Stockholm)
- For every additional year of education that girls in a country receive on average, the country’s resiliency to climate change rises by 3.2 points on the ND-GAIN index. (Brookings Institute)

Source: xxxx

Global Voices

Global Voices is a weekly column written by Craig and Marc Kielburger examining current events, topics and issues affecting local and global communities. Each month, engaging classroom resources are created to accompany one column to help educators bring world issues into the classroom in a digestible manner. For more information on how to sign up please visit WE.org/global-voices-signup.

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WE Learning Framework Skills

These icons identify the most relevant skills students will develop using this resource. Learn more about the WE Learning Framework at WE.org/we-schools/program/learning-framework/.

Subject
- English Language Arts
- Media Literacy
- Social Studies

Materials
- Front board
- Paper and writing utensils
- Computer/tablet with Internet access

Key Terms
- Terrorism—Violent acts carried out by individuals with extreme radical political or religious beliefs.
- Climate change—Changes to weather patterns around the world, caused by rising global temperatures, which are caused by increased levels of greenhouse gasses like carbon dioxide and methane in the atmosphere from human activities and industry.
- HIV/AIDS—The Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV) is a virus that attacks the immune system. If left untreated, the virus slowly destroys the body’s ability to fight off illnesses like pneumonia. This condition is called Acquired Immunodeficiency Syndrome (AIDS). Modern medicine cannot yet cure HIV/AIDS, only treat it and slow down its effects.
- ND-GAIN Index—A system developed by Notre Dame University in the U.S. to measure the climate change resiliency of countries. That means their ability to weather and overcome the effects of climate change like droughts and extreme storms.

Globally, an estimated 130 million girls are not attending school, and 15 million primary-school aged girls will never attend school in their life. (UNESCO/World Bank)
Classroom Activity - Grades 9 to 12

Essential Question:

► Why is education an essential part of sustainable development?

Learning Goals:

Students will:

► Recognize the consequences a lack of education has on girls around the world
► Investigate how receiving an education helps girls contribute to positive change in their community

Discussion:

1. Why are girls less likely to be educated than boys in many countries around the world?
2. What are the barriers that limit girls’ access to education?
3. What do the authors mean when they say “Closing that gender gap is the right thing to do—full stop. But beyond moral pleas for equality, there’s also a logical proposition here”?
4. How does educating girls contribute to fighting issues like climate change?
5. Does this article sufficiently demonstrate the importance of education for girls? Why or why not? What other information or perspectives are needed?

Warm Up: (20 minutes)

Educator’s Note: The following video addresses the issue of child marriage. If students are not familiar with this issue, take time to discuss it before viewing the video. Please also be mindful that some students may have personal experience with this issue and may find it difficult to discuss.

Explain to students that the video they will see will introduce them to Faith. Faith attends the Kisaruni All Girls Secondary School in one of the WE Villages partner communities in the Maasai Mara, Kenya. However, her journey to get to school has not been an easy one.


Investigate and Learn: (2 x 60 minutes)

Explain to students that millions of girls like Faith around the world are not able to attend school.

Pose the following questions to students: What would Faith’s life have been like if she had not been able to attend school? On a piece of chart paper, make a list of all of the students’ ideas.

Turn the chart paper over and ask students to consider what the benefits or positive outcomes are when girls can attend school. List students’ responses on the chart paper.

Ask students to return to their pairs or groups and distribute copies of the article “Girls Can Save the World: The Unexpected Benefits of Educating Girls” or invite students to access it online. In their pairs or groups, ask students to read the article and answer the questions from the Discussion session.

When students have had time to read the article and discuss the questions, ask them to join another pair or small group to discuss their responses. Bring students back together and ask one representative from each group to summarize the responses.

Select one of the issues identified in the article and conduct a root cause analysis to explore why this issue is occurring globally or in a country that is particularly relevant for students. This can be done as a class or in the pairs or small groups students worked in previously. Encourage students to use the links in the article to gather more information or to conduct their own research.

Provide students with copies of Blackline Master 1: Root Cause Analysis if they require additional support.
Once students understand more about the root causes of the issue, challenge them to brainstorm how receiving an education can help girls contribute to solutions to issues affecting their communities. Using Faith’s story as an example, encourage students to think about the consequences girls face when they don’t have the opportunity to attend school and the positive impact receiving an education can have on them, their family and their community.

Ask students to present their ideas as a group in an oral presentation or in an individual written report.

**Dive Deeper: (2 x 60 minutes)**

Host a monthly book club with the class or with students who are interested in exploring this issue further. This book club should give students an opportunity to read, share and discuss books that focus on access to education for girls. Invite students to investigate their own titles or provide a collection of books including the following titles:

- *Serafina’s Promise* by Ann E. Burg, Scholastic, 2015
- *The Breadwinner*, by Deborah Ellis, Groundwood Books, 2001
- *Persepolis: The Story of a Childhood*, by Marjane Satrapi, Pantheon, 2004
- *Nasreen’s Secret School: A True Story from Afghanistan*, Jeanette Winter, Beach Lane Books, 2009

**Extension:** October 11th is the United Nations International Day of the Girl Child. This day aims to highlight and address the needs and challenges that girls face, while also promoting girls’ empowerment and the fulfillment of their human rights. To learn more about how this day is recognized around the world, visit [www.un.org/en/events/girlchild](http://www.un.org/en/events/girlchild) and [www.unwomen.org/en/news/in-focus/girl-child](http://www.unwomen.org/en/news/in-focus/girl-child).

**Enrichment:** Now that students understand more about the benefits of access to education for girls, encourage them to take action by signing up for the WE Are Silent fundraising initiative and helping to give children in WE Villages communities access to education. Visit [www.WE.org/we-schools/program/campaigns/we-are-silent/](http://www.WE.org/we-schools/program/campaigns/we-are-silent/) for more information.

**Educator’s Note:** The titles above include books at a range of different levels and a range of genres, so all students will be able to engage in the book club discussions.
Blackline Master 1: Root Cause Analysis

The Issue

Symptoms/Effects (the results created by the issue)

Root Causes (the situations or factors that have led to the issue)