ESL LAB

International Women's Day Activity Pack

Nine printables for March 8 lessons with adults: a quiz on how the day began, vocabulary, biography clues, conversation cards and a campaign to plan. Every page works in pairs or alone, and every answer is on the page.

LEVEL	STUDENTS	GROUPING	TIME
A1 to C1	Adults and older teens	Pairs and small groups	10 to 45 minutes each

What's inside, in the order of the blog post

1	**Women's Day quiz**	Ten questions about how March 8 began, answers upside down	**Page 2**
2	**Words for Women's Day**	Twelve words and twelve definitions to match	**Page 3**
3	**Who am I?**	Eight biography cards, four clues each	**Page 4**
4	**A woman who shaped me**	Six interview questions and sentence starters	**Page 5**
5	**What if?**	Twelve second conditional cards	**Page 6**
6	**Actually, that's not true**	Ten stereotype cards and phrases to push back	**Page 7**
7	**Flowers or fairness?**	Rank eight ways to mark the day	**Page 8**
8	**Pay gap math**	Two colleagues, one job, five sums	**Page 9**
10	**Campaign poster**	A planner for slogan, hashtag and calls to action	**Page 10**

Activity 9 in the post (women in the news) needs nothing printed. Pages 3, 4, 6 and 7 are cards: print one per pair or group and cut on the dashed lines.

Language for the day

TALKING ABOUT A PERSON

She was born in ...
She became the first woman to ...
She taught me to ...

GIVING AN OPINION

I think ... because ...
In my country, ...
It depends on ...

DISAGREEING POLITELY

Actually, ...
I see your point, but ...
That's not always true.

ACTIVITY 1

Women's Day quiz

Tick one answer for each question. Work alone, then compare with a partner. Turn the page around to check.

1 **What date is International Women's Day?**

- ○ **a** May 1
- ○ **b** March 8
- ○ **c** February 14

2 **In 1910, Clara Zetkin suggested a women's day at a meeting of about 100 women from 17 countries. Where was the meeting?**

- ○ **a** Copenhagen
- ○ **b** Paris
- ○ **c** London

3 **The first Women's Day was in 1911. How many people took part?**

- ○ **a** About a thousand
- ○ **b** About ten thousand
- ○ **c** More than a million

4 **In 1917, women in Petrograd went on strike on March 8. What did they ask for?**

- ○ **a** Longer holidays
- ○ **b** Flowers and chocolate
- ○ **c** Bread and peace

5 **When did the United Nations first celebrate the day?**

- ○ **a** 1945
- ○ **b** 1975
- ○ **c** 2000

6 **In Italy, people give women a small yellow flower on March 8. Which flower?**

- ○ **a** Mimosa
- ○ **b** Tulip
- ○ **c** Sunflower

7 **The colors of the day are purple, green and ...**

- ○ **a** red
- ○ **b** blue
- ○ **c** white

8 **Since 2019, March 8 has been a public holiday in one German city. Which one?**

- ○ **a** Munich
- ○ **b** Berlin
- ○ **c** Hamburg

9 **In China, many women who work full time get what on March 8?**

- ○ **a** A half day off
- ○ **b** A free lunch
- ○ **c** A week off

10 **Which month is Women's History Month in the US, the UK and Australia?**

- ○ **a** June
- ○ **b** October
- ○ **c** March

Answers: **1 b** Countries all over the world mark it on March 8. **2 a** The International Conference of Working Women met in Copenhagen and said yes to her idea. **3 c** More than a million people marked it in Austria, Denmark, Germany and Switzerland. **4 c** Their strike helped start the revolution, and March 8 became the date of the day. **5 b** 1975 was International Women's Year, and the UN marked March 8 for the first time. **6 a** Women's groups chose mimosa in 1946 because it was cheap and grew everywhere. **7 c** British women who fought for the vote chose them in 1908. **8 b** Berlin made it a holiday in 2019, and the state of Mecklenburg-Vorpommern followed in 2023. **9 a** A national rule gives women a half day off work. **10 c** March, the month of International Women's Day.

ACTIVITY 2

Words for Women's Day

Match each word to its meaning and write the letter in the box. In class, cut out the cards and play pairs: turn them face down and find a word and its meaning.

1 **equality** ☐	2 **rights** ☐	3 **vote** ☐	4 **leader** ☐
5 **achievement** ☐	6 **role model** ☐	7 **stereotype** ☐	8 **pay gap** ☐
9 **inspire** ☐	10 **campaign** ☐	11 **career** ☐	12 **celebrate** ☐

A a fixed idea about a group of people that is often wrong	B to choose a person or an idea in an election	C a plan of actions to change something	D when everyone has the same rights and chances
E to do something special on an important day	F something good you did after working hard	G to make other people want to do something great	H things the law says you can have or do
I the jobs you do during your working life	J the person in charge of a group, a company or a country	K the difference between what two groups of people earn	L a person you admire and want to be like

Answers: 1 D 2 H 3 B 4 J 5 F 6 L 7 A 8 K 9 G 10 C 11 I 12 E

ACTIVITY 3

Who am I?

Student A reads the clues one by one. Student B guesses after each clue: a right guess after clue 1 wins 4 points, after clue 4 wins 1 point. The name is upside down at the bottom of each card: fold it back before you start. Cut on the dashed lines.

CARD 1 · WHO AM I?

1. I was born in Warsaw in 1867.
2. I moved to Paris to study science.
3. In 1903, I became the first woman to win a Nobel Prize.
4. I won a second Nobel Prize in 1911, for my work on radium.

Marie Curie

CARD 2 · WHO AM I?

1. I was born in Chile in 1889.
2. I started working as a teacher when I was 15.
3. I wrote poems about children, love and loss.
4. In 1945, I became the first Latin American writer to win the Nobel Prize in Literature.

Gabriela Mistral

CARD 3 · WHO AM I?

1. I was born in London in 1815.
2. My father was the famous poet Lord Byron.
3. I worked with Charles Babbage on his idea for a calculating machine.
4. Many people call my notes the first computer program.

Ada Lovelace

CARD 4 · WHO AM I?

1. I was born in Mexico City in 1907.
2. A bus accident when I was 18 changed my life.
3. I was married to the painter Diego Rivera.
4. I painted many famous pictures of my own face.

Frida Kahlo

CARD 5 · WHO AM I?

1. I was born in Kansas, USA, in 1897.
2. I learned to fly in the 1920s, when few women did.
3. In 1932, I became the first woman to fly alone across the Atlantic.
4. In 1937, my plane disappeared over the Pacific Ocean.

Amelia Earhart

CARD 6 · WHO AM I?

1. I was born in West Virginia, USA, in 1918.
2. I was very good at math and worked for NASA.
3. In 1962, I checked the numbers for John Glenn's flight around the Earth.
4. The 2016 film Hidden Figures told my story.

Katherine Johnson

CARD 7 · WHO AM I?

1. I was born in Alabama, USA, in 1913.
2. I worked as a seamstress in Montgomery.
3. In 1955, I refused to give my bus seat to a white passenger.
4. My arrest started a bus boycott that changed US history.

Rosa Parks

CARD 8 · WHO AM I?

1. I was born in Pakistan in 1997.
2. As a schoolgirl, I wrote a blog about wanting to go to school.
3. In 2012, I was attacked because I said girls should study.
4. At 17, I became the youngest person to win the Nobel Peace Prize.

Malala Yousafzai

ACTIVITY 4

A woman who shaped me

Think of a woman who changed your life: a mother, a grandmother, a teacher, a boss, a friend. Ask your partner these questions and write short notes. Then tell the class about your partner's choice.

1. **Who is the woman you chose, and how do you know her?**

2. **What did she do for work, or what does she do now?**

3. **What is the most important thing she taught you?**

4. **Tell me about a day with her that you will never forget.**

5. **What was hard in her life, and how did she deal with it?**

6. **If you could say one thing to her today, what would you say?**

Tell the class

My partner chose **her grandmother**. She **worked** as a nurse for forty years.

She taught my partner **to** be patient. ~~She taught her be patient.~~ She taught her **how to** cook.

Past simple for her life: *she grew up, she worked, she moved*. Present for what is still true: *she still lives*.

ACTIVITY 5

What if?

If + past simple, **would** + verb. *If every boss <u>were</u> a woman, meetings <u>would</u> be shorter.* Use *were* for every person: *if I were, if she were*. Take a card, answer it, then ask your partner.

1
What if every boss at your company were a woman?

2
What if men and women did exactly half of the housework each?

3
What if fathers got the same parental leave as mothers in your country?

4
What if you could have dinner with any woman from history? Who would you invite?

5
What if your country had only women in government for ten years?

6
What if everyone's salary were public?

7
What if you swapped jobs with your mother or father for a week?

8
What if March 8 were a day off for everyone in your country?

9
What if there were no Women's Day? Would anything change?

10
What if every film had as many women as men in the main roles?

11
What if you could change one law to make life fairer?

12
What if your grandmother were 25 today? How would her life be different?

ACTIVITY 6

Actually, that's not true

Take a card and read it aloud. Agree, disagree or say it depends, and give one real example from your life. Your partner answers with one of the phrases below. Cut on the dashed lines.

DISAGREE	PARTLY AGREE	GIVE EVIDENCE
Actually, ...	It depends on the person.	In my experience, ...
In fact, ...	I see your point, but ...	For example, my ...
That's not always true.	Some are, some aren't.	I read that ...

PEOPLE OFTEN SAY

"Women are better at multitasking."

AGREE DISAGREE IT DEPENDS

PEOPLE OFTEN SAY

"Men don't cry."

AGREE DISAGREE IT DEPENDS

PEOPLE OFTEN SAY

"Boys are better at math than girls."

AGREE DISAGREE IT DEPENDS

PEOPLE OFTEN SAY

"Women talk more than men."

AGREE DISAGREE IT DEPENDS

PEOPLE OFTEN SAY

"Men are bad at looking after babies."

AGREE DISAGREE IT DEPENDS

PEOPLE OFTEN SAY

"Women are worse drivers."

AGREE DISAGREE IT DEPENDS

PEOPLE OFTEN SAY

"Men don't care about fashion."

AGREE DISAGREE IT DEPENDS

PEOPLE OFTEN SAY

"Women don't like video games."

AGREE DISAGREE IT DEPENDS

PEOPLE OFTEN SAY

"Men are better leaders."

AGREE DISAGREE IT DEPENDS

PEOPLE OFTEN SAY

"Women are more emotional."

AGREE DISAGREE IT DEPENDS

ACTIVITY 7

Flowers or fairness?

What is the best way to mark March 8? Rank these from 1 (best) to 8 on your own in the Me boxes. Then ask your partner for theirs, compare with your partner and agree on a top three together.

☐ ME ☐ PARTNER Flowers	☐ ME ☐ PARTNER Chocolates
☐ ME ☐ PARTNER A day off work	☐ ME ☐ PARTNER A card from your family
☐ ME ☐ PARTNER Equal pay at work	☐ ME ☐ PARTNER Help with housework every day, not only on March 8
☐ ME ☐ PARTNER A free class or course	☐ ME ☐ PARTNER Dinner at a nice restaurant

Compare and agree

I'd rather have ... than ... ... is more useful than ... ... lasts longer than ...

I put ... first because ... Let's put ... in our top three. OK, I can live with that.

Our top three

1 _____

2 _____

3 _____

Write one sentence: *On March 8, women don't need ..., they need ...*

ACTIVITY 8

Pay gap math

Tom
Nurse, 10 years at the hospital
€20.00 an hour

Ana
Nurse, 10 years at the same hospital
€17.60 an hour

Ana and Tom are invented, but the gap is real: in the EU in 2023, women earned on average 12.0% less per hour than men (Eurostat). Ana earns 12% less than Tom.

Do the math

1. How much less does Ana earn per hour?
2. They both work 160 hours a month. How much does each of them earn a month?
3. What is the difference in one year?
4. And in a 30-year career?
5. 12% of a year is about how many days? These are the days Ana works for free, compared with Tom.

Talk about it

A. Ana and Tom do the same job. Give three reasons why their pay could still be different.
B. Should companies show everyone's salary? Why or why not?
C. What would you say to your boss if you found out you earned less than a colleague?

Useful language: per hour, a month, a year · the difference between … and … is … · twelve percent less than …

Answers: **1** €2.40 less **2** Tom €3,200, Ana €2,816 **3** €384 x 12 = €4,608 **4** €4,608 x 30 = €138,240 **5** about 44 days (12% of 365 = 43.8)

ACTIVITY 10

Campaign poster

In your group, choose one issue for women in your town, your country or your workplace. Plan a campaign, then sketch the poster and present it in two minutes.

Our issue

What do you want to change? One sentence.

Who we want to reach

Students, parents, bosses, the government?

Our slogan

Six words or fewer.

Our hashtag

#

Three things people should do

Use imperatives: Join ..., Ask ..., Don't ...

Why it matters

Use should, must or need to.

POSTER SKETCH

Slogan ideas: *Equal work, equal pay. · Ask her, then listen. · Every girl in school.*