



Girl Saints

Educational Guide

by
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Girl Saints

Girl Saints examines representations of sixteen female saints to learn about their lives and deaths.

While girls being tortured and killed, whether for religious or political reasons, is not a celebration, these images demonstrate a strong theme in history: the destruction of girlhood. This exhibition considers these ideas and asks: do the messages justify their representations?

This educational guide is designed for classroom use with students in primary/elementary school, secondary school and university settings. All the activities are designed for ease of copy and distribution to your students. Also noted are links to both the UK National Curriculum (pg. 4) and the US Common Core (pg. 5).



Discussion Questions

Students can answer the following questions on their own or in groups.

The following questions can be focused on one image, a selection of images, or all of the images from the *Girl Saints* exhibition.

1. What message is the image(s) trying to convey?
2. Do you agree with the message? Why or why not?
3. What does the image tell you about life for girls at the time it was created?
4. What does the image tell you about the religious culture at the time it was created? Why do you think this girl's story was important to the artist?
5. What does the image tell you about attitudes to girls at the time it was created?
6. How do you think the image would be viewed by the modern world? Are girls still depicted this way? Why or why not?

Analysis:

Analyze the three images on this page.

Using the images and details from the exhibition, discuss the similarities and differences between these *Girl Saints* and their stories.

Consider what category each girl falls into:

- **Mythical Saints:** whose story is based in legend rather than fact
- **Fantastical Saints:** whose stories are true but have been greatly embellished
- **Real Saints:** whose story has been accurately documented in history



Activities

Activity #1: Modern Day Girl Saint

Research a girl today, or in recent history, who stood up for her beliefs and fought against prejudice to change people's attitudes.

Create a piece of artwork, using whichever media you feel comfortable with, illustrating this modern girl saint's story.

Display your final pieces in a gallery to share with your classmates!

Activity #2: Dear Diary

None of the stories of the girl saints are told from the point of view of the girls themselves.

Choose one of the girl saints from the exhibition and write a diary entry from their perspective.

Think about what they might be thinking and how they might be feeling. How does it compare to the representation of them in the image?

Activity #3: Other Cultures

All of the saints in this exhibition are from the Catholic faith. However, saints or saint-like figures also appear in other religions and cultures.

Research a saint from another religion or culture.

Write their story or produce an artwork depicting their story.

How do they compare to the Catholic saints?

Discuss your findings as a class.



UK National Curriculum Links:

History KS1 & KS2:

- Understand historical concepts such as continuity & change

- The lives of significant individuals in the past

Art & Design: KS1 & KS2:

- Produce creative work
- To use a range of materials creatively

English KS1 & KS2:

- Use discussion in order to learn
- Ask relevant questions to extend their understanding & knowledge
- Articulate & justify answers, arguments & opinions
- Identify the audience for and purpose of the writing
- Drawing on reading and research where necessary
- Identifying the audience for & purpose of the writing
- In narratives, describing settings, characters, & atmosphere

Activities continued



US Common Core Links:

History/Social Studies:

- Determine the central ideas or information of a primary or secondary source; provide an accurate summary of the source distinct from prior knowledge or opinions

Speaking & Listening:

- Pose and respond to specific questions with elaboration and detail by making comments that contribute to the topic, text, or issue under discussion
- Interpret information presented in diverse media and formats (e.g., visually, quantitatively, orally) and explain how it contributes to a topic, text, or issue under study

Writing:

- Conduct short research projects to answer a question, drawing on several sources and refocusing the inquiry when appropriate

Activity #4: Contemporary Canonization

Very few people are canonized as saints in the modern world.

Think of someone who you feel deserves to be recognized and honored for his or her achievements. It could be a celebrity, someone from your local community, or even a family member.

Write a letter to a current religious, cultural, or political leader convincing them to pay tribute to this person's life and work.

You could send your letter to your chosen leader for real, or consider sharing it with us to post on our blog by emailing it to share@girlmuseum.org

Activity #5: In Depth Analysis

Use the exhibition, along with your own research, to write an essay on one of the following titles:

- How have the Catholic faith's perceptions of girls changed over time?
- How have the actions of female saints changed the world's attitudes towards women?

Ask your teacher for advice on word count.

Bonus points:

Share your activities with us to be featured on *Girl Museum's* blog!

Email an essay, photos, and/or a video of your project to share@girlmuseum.org

Girl Museum

We are the first and only online museum about girlhood.

We exhibit, educate, and raise awareness about the unique experience of being born and growing up female around the world in the past and present.

As a community of passionate and creative individuals, we acknowledge and advocate for girls as forces for collective responsibility and change in the global context, not as victims and consumers.

We are a 501(c)3 non-profit educational organization.

Learn more and get involved at www.GirlMuseum.org



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Activity #6: Saints on Stage & Screen



As a class or in groups, re-create one of the *Girl Saints'* stories in a play or as a short film.

You might want to put a modern twist on the story or you may want to take a more historically accurate approach.

Consider whether you would want to include the embellishments from the stories of mythical or fantastical saints.

You could perform or screen your finished piece to the rest of your class or school.

You might want to charge a small fee for attending your performance and then donate the profits to a charity supporting girls who are persecuted for following their beliefs!