



## *Educational Guide*



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*Activity: Create Your Own  
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*Reading and Discussion*

# SPARKED!

## *Sparked! Girl Entrepreneurs*

This exhibition explores girl entrepreneurs of today and through history. In the exhibition you will learn who they are, what they do, and how they got there!

Use this education guide to interact with the exhibit and follow their stories while gaining inspiration for your own entrepreneurship goals.

Activities in this guide are aligned to U.S. and/or U.K. educational standards. They are designed to be used by students and teachers as school lessons or enrichment opportunities.

## Activity: *Create Your Own Business*



Throughout history, many influential women and girls have begun their own successful businesses that marked innovative changes on society. Drawing inspiration from the Entrepreneur Girls in the exhibit, you will create your own business and explore one another's businesses in a market setting. You will learn what it is like to be an Entrepreneur Girl!

### Materials:

- A table/desk, paper, markers, crayons, and other material necessary for setting up a business station and creating your logo
- Faux-money for transactions

### How to get started:

- Brainstorm what you want your business to be. What do you want to promote? What ideas do you want to include? What themes will be involved with your business?
- Create a logo for your business. Feel free to draw inspiration from the exhibit!
- Set up a table or a desk for your business. Include products you are selling or ideas you are promoting. Decorate it however you want! If you are selling products, you do not need to have the actual products. Use paper and other materials to represent what you are selling.

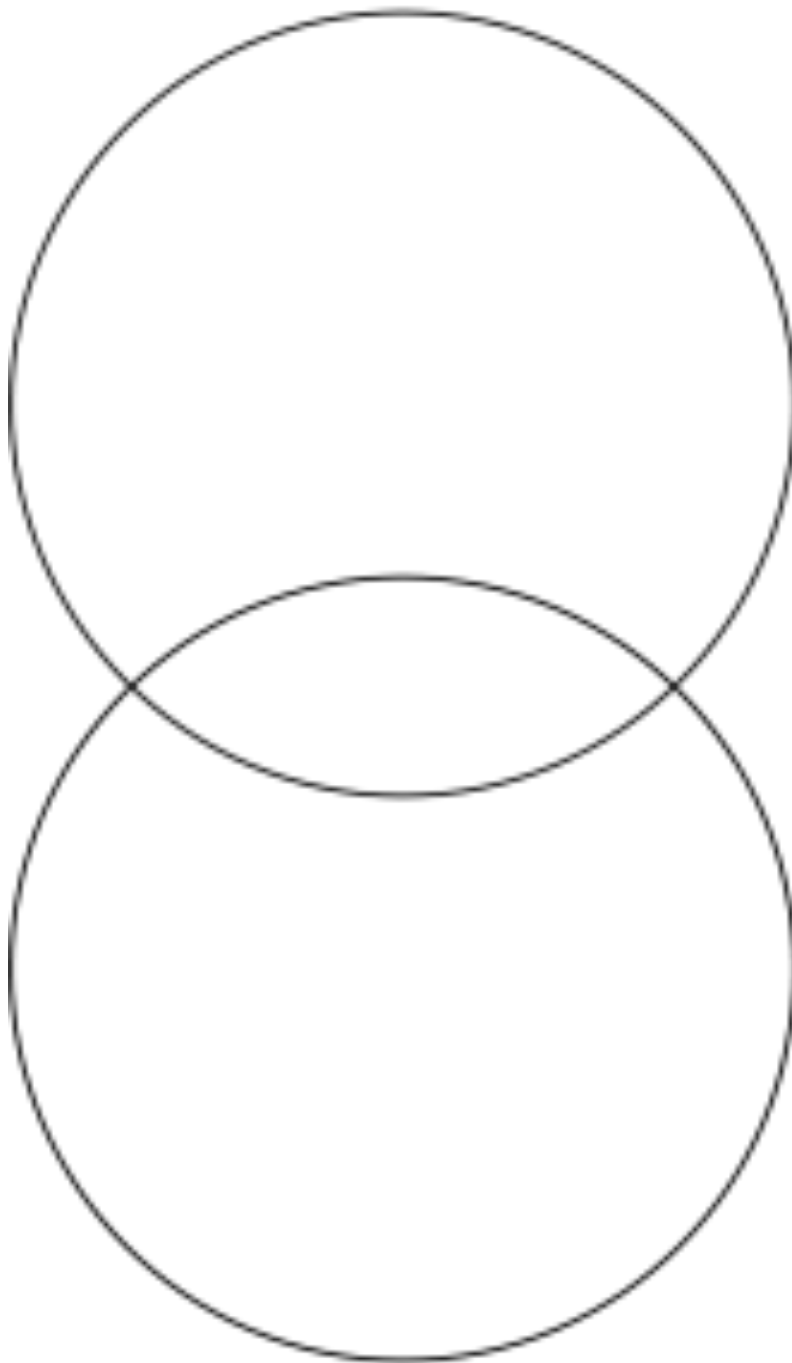
Half of the class will remain at their businesses while the other half explores their classmates' businesses. Everyone will have faux-money that they can use to buy or invest in businesses that they are interested in.

### Educational Standards

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.608.7  
Integrate visual information  
(e.g., in charts, graphs,  
photographs, videos, or maps)  
with other information in print  
and digital texts.

## *Activity: Venn Diagram*

Explore the exhibit and choose two women, one from history and one from the present, and create a Venn Diagram. Consider the different time periods involved and how that would make a difference on the businesses these women created.



### Educational Standards

**CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.8.3**  
Analyze how a text makes connections among and distinctions between individuals, ideas, or events (e.g., through comparisons, analogies, or categories).



# GIRL ENTREPRENEURS DISCUSSION GUIDE

## struggles girl entrepreneurs have faced in the past

Read the following information about gender stereotypes and lack of education to learn more about some of the struggles that girl entrepreneurs have faced. Then, complete the activity that follows.

### Gender Stereotypes

Throughout history, it has been accepted by society that a woman's place was in her home, caring for her husband and children. It was feared that traditionally feminine traits would be lost if women were to enter the workforce. Eventually, women began extending their work outside the home. The integration of women into the workforce was a slow process and was often viewed unfavourably by society. Women were regarded as temporary employees and their jobs were expected to take second place next to marriage and childbearing. By the middle of the nineteenth century, more women became involved in teaching, nursing, and clerical work. These jobs were perceived as feminine, and society deemed them appropriate for single women.

Women in particular were constrained in their business choices by the requirements of propriety, any domestic demands of their household, and a need to present their businesses as a pursuit of independence and self-sufficiency, rather than in pursuit of profits. However, 85% of these businesses fell into traditionally female categories of domestic enterprise, such as a lodging-house keeper or innkeeper; shopkeeper; home-based production and sale of clothing; food and drink provision; and school keeping. These enterprises met the contemporary requirement for maintaining status, but at the same time their connection with the household has led historians to overlook their business elements.

### Educational Standards

**CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.8.3**  
Analyze how a text makes connections among and distinctions between individuals, ideas, or events (e.g., through comparisons, analogies, or categories).

**CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.9-10.1**  
Cite strong and thorough textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text.



## Lack of Education

In early periods of history the motherhood and hostess ideals reigned strong. Girls and women were taught that their sole function was to marry, have children, and look after the home. It was believed that teaching women to read or write was a waste of time. If women were educated, then they would come to know that they were inferior to men. In the homes of poorer families, girls as young as 14 would be swiftly married to avoid them from becoming a liability at home. Noble families and the landed-gentry married daughters mainly to form alliances with other families, and/or bring further wealth to the family. It was a rare occurrence that girls could choose who they married.

In the Georgian era, female literacy rates were increasing. However, “separate spheres” meant that families were no longer teaching their daughters the same as their sons. Boys were sent to boarding schools, whilst girls went to dame schools, or were taught by governesses at home. Girls education was tailored towards the role as wives and mothers. This included learning how to make delicate conversation, sew, or manage servants instead of develop intellect. Girls were beginning to move on to university study by the 1860s, but these were segregated and universities would limit the number of female students well into the 20th century. Some subjects studied became associated with certain gender aspects. For example, English literature and geography were regarded as appropriate for women, whilst Latin and geology were only suitable for men. Overall, however, boys progressed to higher levels, producing an imbalance in qualifications that persisted until only recently.

### Now and Then



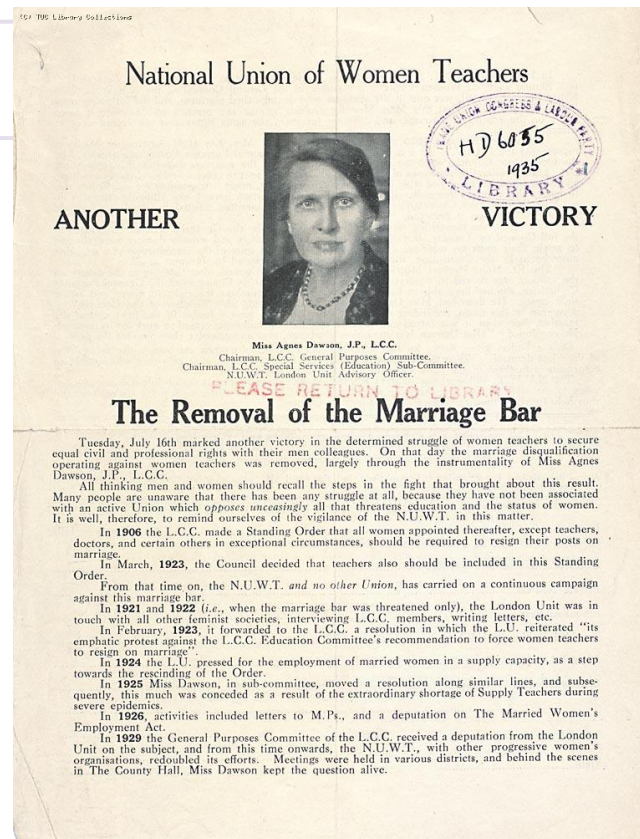
After reading the article, consider whether gender stereotypes or lack of education presented bigger barriers to girl entrepreneurs. Then, think about barriers that girls might face today when starting their own businesses. Are these barriers the same, or have they changed with the times? Which impacts girls more today: gender stereotypes or lack of education? Citing evidence from the article, current events, and your own experiences, write a short essay analyzing the struggles that girl entrepreneurs faced in the past compared to today.





## Social Barriers

The Marriage Bar restricted employment of married women in Britain during interwar years. Government policy strengthened sex differentiation prior to the war. Women were not permitted to earn more than 80% of what a man would doing the same job. Many women started businesses at home to help their work-life balance. These aimed to work alongside the domestic requirements of running a household and looking after children. The need to work was necessary as many middle-class men would not have been able to support their non-working wives or daughters on their own. Women, therefore, adapted their businesses to work alongside their domestic duties.



National Union of Women Teachers leaflet against the marriage bar, 1935. Image courtesy of TUC Library Collections at London Metropolitan University.

## Discriminatory Laws and Environments

The legal status of women classed them as dependents until they married. Thereafter, a woman was considered to be under her husband's protection and authority after marriage. Women had no separate identity and few or no personal rights, including economic and property rights. This status was linked with the idea that a woman's place was in the home and the man's place was in the public world.



“The man's power is active, progressive, defensive. He is eminently the doer, the creator, the discoverer, the defender. His intellect is for speculation, and invention; his energy for adventure, for war, and for conquest... But the woman's power is for rule, not for battle - and her intellect is not for invention or creation, but for sweet ordering, arrangement, and decision... She must be enduringly, incorruptibly good; instinctively, infallibly wise - wise, not for self-development, but for self-renunciation: wise, not that she may set herself above her husband, but that she may never fail from his side.”

**John Ruskin**

Sesame and Lilies, 1865, Part II

<http://www.vam.ac.uk/content/articles/g/gender-ideology-and-separate-spheres-19th-century/>



# Discriminatory Laws and Environments

## Case Study: United Kingdom

### Property Rights

In the past, any property held by women transferred to their husbands on marriage. The Married Women's Property Act 1870 allowed a woman to treat any money earned as her own property, not that of her husband's. This Act was extended in 1882 to give women complete control of their own property. However, it was not until 50 years later with the passage of the Law of Property Act 1922 that both the husband and wife could inherit property equally. In 1964, the amended Married Women's Property Act entitled a woman to keep half of any savings she made from the allowance (i.e. housekeeping money) provided by her husband.

### Workplace conditions, equal pay, and maternity leave

In 1909, the National Federation of Women Workers campaigned alongside other women's organisations to uncover the harmful effects of working long hours in the sweated trades. The clothing, footwear and furniture industries allowed women and children to work at home, but many started shouting out against the low wages and insanitary conditions that came with such employment. As time moved forward, conditions for women slowly improved, but it was not until the Equal Pay Act of 1970 when it became illegal to pay women lower rates than men for the same work. The Employment Protection Act 1975 that followed introduced statutory maternity provision for women who had worked for a long qualifying period. Employers could no longer terminate employment because a woman was pregnant and this was extended in 1993 to all working women in order to comply with a European Commission directive. We then see individuals protected against discrimination based on their sexual orientation with the Employment Equality (Sexual Orientation) Regulations in 2003.

### Introduction of the "Marriage Bar" in the interwar years

There were many occupations closed to women for a time due to a lack of education and social values. Industries where women could find employment, such as factory work, clerical work, teaching, and domestic service, introduced the "marriage bar" during the interwar years. This prevented women from working in these roles either when they had married, or once they became pregnant. There was no option but to leave work. A marriage bar was justified due to the belief that a woman would be unable to combine work and domestic life, despite many working-class women doing just this historically to support their families.

### Women, mortgages, and taxation

As late as the 1970s, we see working women refused mortgages in their own right because so few worked on a continuous basis. A woman was only granted a mortgage if they could secure the signature of a male guarantor. The female role within society has changed considerably in the past 100 years and today women have far more financial independence than ever before. It is now commonplace for a woman to buy her own house using employment earnings, or apply for a loan in her own name. UK Parliament then introduced independent taxation at the start of the 1990/91 tax year. For the first time, a husband and wife would be taxed separately based on their income and be entitled to the same personal allowance.



# Discriminatory Laws and Environments

## Case Study: United States

### Property Rights

Some states started enacting common law principles relating to property rights of married women during the 1800s. Connecticut, for instance, was one of the first states to enact a law allowing women to write wills. This allowed women to protect land inherited from their husbands and in some cases gave widows legal access to their husband's personal estates. Many other states passed similar statutes moving towards the 1850s, including the Married Women's Property Act 1848 in New York State that became model legislation for other states in America. However, states tended to focus on the suitable pleadings a wife should use prior to the Civil War, instead of altering the privileges a husband had under common law principles. After the American Civil War of 1861-1865, laws became more concerned with equality for both the husband and wife when it came to property. The Homestead Act of 1862, for instance, shows that federal government did not make gender one of the statutory conditions for property ownership. It was around this time that some states began to recognise separate and inherited estates owned by women as part of the family income, and therefore, allowing creditors to claim the property to pay family debts. The right of dower was abolished in 1945. Many states, however, retained portions of the older laws, despite the fact these had been repealed.

### Community Property

Spain and Mexico greatly influenced the development of property laws in the Western US, particularly in relation to community property. The California Constitution of 1849 is one of the earliest laws making a distinction between the separate property of the wife and common property held with her husband.

At this time, husbands tended to manage and dispose of property, despite states passing legislation that named marital property as community property. The majority of state laws only allowed the wife to manage the property if her husband died.

### Workplace conditions, equal pay, and maternity leave

The Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA) 1938 establishes a national minimum wage for men and women working in the private sector and in Federal, State, and local governments. In 1945, the U.S. Congress introduced the Women's Equal Pay Act, which would have made it illegal to pay women less than men for work of "comparable quality and quantity". The measure failed to pass and little progress was made on pay equity during the 1950s, despite campaigns by women's groups. The Equal Pay Act (signed by President Kennedy in 1963) is a law that prohibits gender-based wage discrimination in the United States. Yet, women were expected to leave their jobs upon becoming pregnant in the 1960s. In 1978, the Pregnancy Discrimination Act was passed. This prohibited discrimination based on pregnancy and childbirth in employment, including decisions related to hiring, firing, and promotions. 9 years later and a US Supreme Court Decision upheld a California law that required most employers to give pregnant women four months of unpaid leave and the right to return to the same job. A similar law came into effect on a national level when President Bill Clinton signed the Family and Medical Leave Act in 1993 (only 26 years ago). This provided eligible workers 12 weeks of unpaid leave to care for a new child. Today, companies develop their own maternity programs.



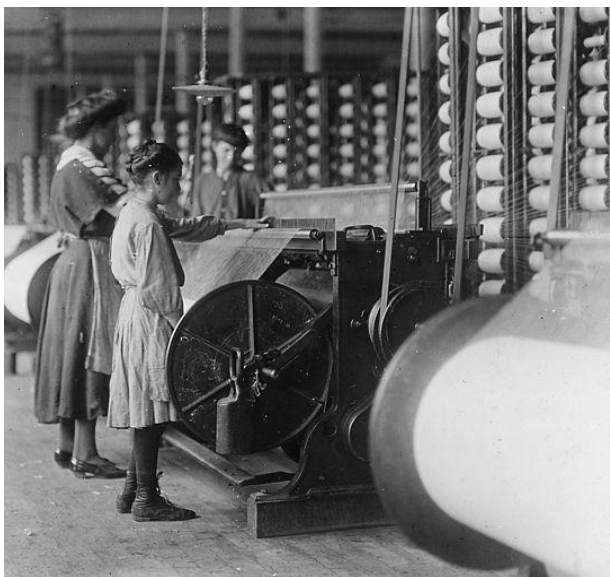


## Victorian Values

When Victoria rose to the throne, women were defined physically and intellectually as the 'weaker' sex. In private life women were subject to fathers, husbands, brothers and sons. Publicly, men dominated all decision-making in political, legal and economic affairs. Women, therefore, tended to gain employment in gender-specific industries. These ranged from the textiles industry through to seamstress and laundry work, or domestic service in the homes of the wealthy. The latter was in fact the single largest employer of women during the mid-1800s. Women working in the textile and clothing industries came close behind.

It was thought that those women working were doing so temporarily whilst waiting for a husband. As a result, there were no efforts made to reform pay or conditions. If you were unmarried, society simply pitied you, or worse, ignored you completely. Women born into upper- and middle-class families never worked. These women were trained to speak different languages, play music, and learn embroidery skills on a daily basis – accomplishments that would never earn them a living outside their homes. Working women, however, shouldered the double burden of needing to earn a wage and carry out the normal household duties that were expected of them. In the 1830s, wives often supported their husbands in running small family firms or professional practices, but by the 1890s the work and home spheres were completely separated.

World War I threw employment options wide open for women and changed traditional values of the husband providing for his family. These options closed when the war ended. Women were expected to marry, keep house, and bear children once more. It was thought that if women had to work, then it should be in acceptable jobs like domestic service, teaching, retail, nursing, or clerical work. Upper- and Middle-class women went back to living with any male relative who would have her. The old traditional values held in the Victorian era had come back to rule society.





## The Housewife Ideal

Ishigaki's essay on Japan's 'Housewife Debate' of 1955 paints the modern Japanese housewife as a woman concerned only for the trivial (i.e. home life, fashion, and beauty) and unable to engage in taxing matters due to the lack of intellectual stimulation. The life of a housewife is portrayed as one of leisure and freedom from normal tasks and work, whilst they live off the husband's income. Yet, lots of Japanese women did not want to follow the same path as their American counterpart by going into work. They felt they had entered the 'era of the housewife'. This highlights that male and female spheres were still very dominant with no question as to why it should be the female doing domestic duties.

Women experienced an exceptional amount of freedom during World War II as they were allowed into the workforce to assist with the war effort. After the war, many of these women lost their jobs and were expected to return home. However, war had changed life considerably for unmarried women. The shortage of men had once more thrown open the gates of opportunity in the workplace and the percentage of women aged between 14 – 24 years old in the workplace had reached 85% in Britain by 1951. Across the ocean, the numbers were similar with 88% of American women in the workplace holding down similar jobs. There still remained a focus on "feminine" work with career novels appearing on shelves to guide women into those more accepted professions. Yet, as we step further into the 1950s, the numbers of women employed in engineering, manufacture, technological and chemical industries was growing. Change was on the horizon.

Many still considered the man to be the head of the household in the 1950s. This left the married woman trapped with no money or career. Girls were trained to look after their husband, their children, and the house. Schools taught lessons on cookery, household management, darning, sewing and even how to iron a shirt properly. Working-class women would leave school at fifteen, then work in a local shop or factory until they married. However, these ideals were disappearing with the arrival of "dual-earner families" within communities. Extra earnings allowed housewives the financial freedom to buy luxuries that were entering the market at this time (e.g. a washing machine, vacuum cleaner, fridge, motorised sewing machine, and a television). For many households, a second income allowed them to have a holiday each year. This was a welcomed change after five years at war and several years of rationing.







# GIRL ENTREPRENEURS DISCUSSION GUIDE

## struggles girl entrepreneurs face today

Unfortunately, girls and women still face barriers to entrepreneurship today. Read the following information to gain some background knowledge on the topic, then complete the activity that follows.

### Gender Stereotypes

Girls and women face typecasts that have become ingrained into society from a very young age. Researchers have found the biggest myth maintained about gender is that once girls hit puberty, they are thought of as vulnerable and in need of protection to preserve their sexual and reproductive health. Meanwhile, boys are seen as strong and independent. The transition from girlhood to womanhood is often fraught with many culturally-based signals that often leaves girls hesitant to speak up for themselves. Added to this uncertainty are the expectations from parents and pressure to fit in with peers. As a result, girls prefer to keep the peace rather than to speak up with an opinion that might be unpopular. Fear of embarrassment, backlash, or even physical retaliation, pushes girls towards more passive forms of communication. This reluctance to assert themselves, steers girls towards more “feminized” career choices. These are often careers that revolve around caregiving and teaching.



### Educational Standards

**CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.9-10.8**  
Gather relevant information from multiple authoritative print and digital sources, using advanced searches effectively; assess the usefulness of each source in answering the research question; integrate information into the text selectively to maintain the flow of ideas, avoiding plagiarism and following a standard format for citation.

**CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.9-10.1**  
Cite strong and thorough textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text.



# Discriminatory Laws and Environments

## *Discriminatory Laws*

Women today continue to face barriers in the workplace. Even now, women are still campaigning for equal pay rights and few countries have laws legalising equal pay for equal work. Another barrier faced by women in the workplace is sexual harassment. As before, few countries have legislation to battle the issue. This leaves women vulnerable to unwanted sexual behaviour in the workplace and further discrimination. However, it is comforting to find that some countries are recognising the problem. The UK 1975 Sexual Discrimination Act protects both men and women from discrimination on the grounds of their sex or marital status. This helped previous discrimination from employers about pregnancy and maternity leave. There are exceptions to this example. Japan, for instance, has no laws against sexual harassment. With sexual harassment now filtering down into schools, it has become clear that the issue is now a global problem.

## *Environment*

Girls in poorer communities often miss school because of a lack of clean water in their village. Instead, they spend 200 million hours each day fetching water that is often dirty and dangerous to their health. Harmful cultural practices, largely informed by unequal gender norms, expose girls and young women to negative health, education, and economic outcomes. This means girls are unable to negotiate and make decisions about their lives and bodies. Many girls are exposed to sexual and physical violence, which can lead to death at the hands of a partner, or because of backstreet abortions. Poverty and unemployment often forces girls to choose between control over their own bodies and feeding their families.

## RESEARCH ACTIVITY

Find out the answers to the following questions:

- Which countries have laws in place supporting equal pay for equal work and/or protecting people from sexual harassment? What else do these laws help protect?
- What reasons could there be for countries not to adopt such laws?
- Which countries still have laws and social values in place that discriminate against women? Why do you think this might be?
- Are there ways we can encourage countries to change their way of thinking and adopt laws that protect women from harm? Could you put forward the benefits of having these laws in place? If so, what are they?

## COMPARE AND CONTRAST DISCUSSION ACTIVITY

Once you have conducted your research look back at the struggles girl entrepreneurs faced in the past and consider whether they are similar, or if we are now seeing girls face new struggles in a more modern world. It may be that previous struggles have led to new struggles. Write down your thoughts and discuss your findings with your group.





## Limited Access to Funding

Avenues for obtaining funding are growing by the day. Social media, for instance, plays a huge role in giving girls a voice. It provides free access for anyone wanting to launch themselves and their brands into the public eye. Young entrepreneurs can utilise sites such as Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter as a platform to promote themselves. Crowdfunding resources, such as Kickstarter and GoFundMe, give girls easier access to funds and investors. Offline, there are more and more companies introducing funding schemes for girls and young women to utilise. Yet, a wide gender gap still persists despite businesses with female entrepreneurs performing as well as, or better, than those led by men. African women, for example, continue to find it hard to get funding for their start-up businesses, even though studies have shown they manage their finances better than men. The 2014 Findex Report revealed that only 30% of women in sub-Saharan Africa have access to a bank account at a financial institution. As a result, many women are excluded from any financial access. Some areas of business, such as the venture capital community, are experiencing a declining number of women decision-makers in their ranks.

## Low Self-Esteem

The 2017 Dove Global Girls Beauty and Confidence Report found that only 46% of girls globally had high body esteem, and more than half of girls with low body esteem struggle to be assertive. These findings indicate that body image remains a key issue for girls across the globe despite courageous efforts to change the social and cultural environment in which we live in.

One girl campaigning to change what society value the most in people is actress Jameela Jamil. In 2018, she shared her own version of what she “weighed” to speak out against an Instagram post that shared how much each member of the Kardashian family weighed. Instead of describing her weight in kilograms, Jameela matched her weight to the things she values the most in her life. These included being in a loving relationship, having great friends, laughing every day, being financially independent, and speaking out for women’s rights. The amazing responses received encouraged the actress and presenter to start a campaign called “I Weigh”, which celebrates people’s achievements rather than their weight.

### ACTIVITY

Take a look at the Instagram post by Jameela Jamil on the next page and visit the I Weigh Instagram page at [https://www.instagram.com/i\\_weigh/?hl=en](https://www.instagram.com/i_weigh/?hl=en) to find out how others ‘weigh’ themselves. Write your own “I Weigh” post using the examples you have just researched to match your weight in kilograms to the things that you value the most in life.



## Low Self-Esteem



To the left is the Instagram picture that inspired Jameela Jamil to start her I Weigh campaign and share her own version of what she “weighed”. These images are taken from the following *Insider* article:

<https://www.insider.com/jameela-jamil-good-place-body-positive-instagram-i-weigh-2018-3>

There is sadly still an enormous amount of work to do in helping girls develop the resilience they need to overcome social pressures relating to beauty and appearance. We need to create a world where girls are not judged on their looks or held back from achieving their goals because of body image concerns. Yet, there's hope for the future. The Dove report highlighted that 7 out of 10 girls said too much importance was placed on beauty as a source of happiness, and 8 out of 10 thought every girl had something beautiful about them.



“Failure is as important as success.”

**Denitsa Sacheva,**  
Deputy Education  
Minister of  
Bulgaria



# Isolation

There is long-standing evidence that female entrepreneurs do not widely participate in more formal networks that provide support for their male counterparts. In a study of female entrepreneurs in the New Technology Based Firms (NTBF) sector, Alison Hampton et al from the University of Edinburgh found that female entrepreneurs in the early stages of developing their businesses tended to rely on women-only networks. Female entrepreneurs at the growth stage of their businesses, on the other hand, had developed more gender-balanced networks, including participation in typically “boys’ clubs” industry groupings. Avoidance of more formal networks suggests a lack of self-confidence, anxiety about gender discrimination or being viewed as incompetent, and a lingering concern about the time it would take to progress in such networks.

A robust support network is essential for entrepreneurial success, so it’s no surprise that 48% of female entrepreneurs report that a lack of available advisers and mentors limits their professional growth, according to [www.inc.com](http://www.inc.com). Knowing where to find the right support network isn't always easy, but there are few good places to start. Women-focused networking events include WIN Conferences, the EWomen Network, and Bizwomen. An online forum and group created specifically for women in business is the Ellevote Network. Once you find your network of supporters, don’t be afraid to ask for what you really need from them.



”

“Ask often and ...  
be clear about  
what you need.  
You never know  
who has the  
capacity to help,”

**Addie Swartz**  
CEO of reachIRE

## Girl Museum

We are the first and only online museum dedicated to girls.

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 registered 501(c)3 non-profit educational organization.

Learn more and get involved at  
[www.GirlMuseum.org](http://www.GirlMuseum.org)



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Please consider submitting a 1-2 paragraph recap of how you have used this guide and what you, or your students, have learned. Include 1-2 photographs, or a video, if possible.

Send your feedback to [share@girlmuseum.org](mailto:share@girlmuseum.org)

Thank you!