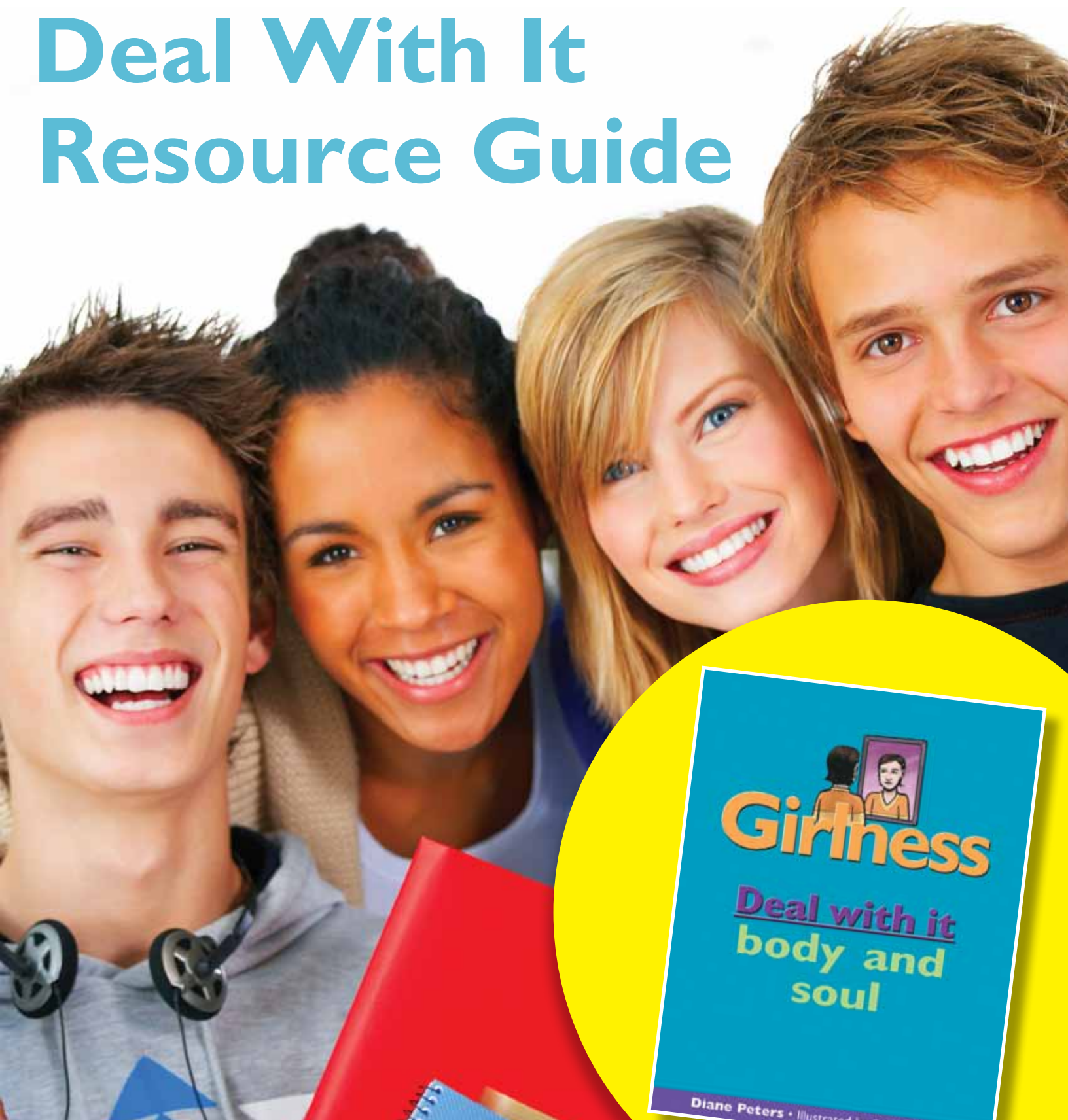


Girliness: Deal With It Resource Guide



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How to Use this Guide

This guide offers a number of informative and enjoyable discussion questions and teaching activities that allow for in-depth coverage of the causes of conflict from several angles.

Guide Map

This guide begins on page 3 with an introduction to the issue covered in the Deal With It book. Please be sure to read the **Before You Begin** section, which provides suggestions to help you consider the specific needs and interests of your class. It also outlines any particular scenarios presented in the Deal With It book that may be sensitive to some students.

The pages that follow correspond with the sections of the Deal With It book.

These sections are:

- A **101** section that introduces readers to a subject (See page 4 of this guide)
- An **Instigator** section that focuses on the person who instigates the conflict (See page 6 of this guide)
- A **Target** section that focuses on the person who feels victimized in the conflict (See page 8 of this guide)
- A **Witness** section with tips for those caught in between (See page 10 of this guide)

For each of these sections, you will find:

Highlights that briefly capture the main points from the Deal With It book, which you will want to review with students.

Discussion Questions that are designed to introduce students to the topics and encourage them to think critically about the topics at hand.

Teaching Activities that correspond to page numbers in the Deal With It book, and are designated as activities for Individuals (I), Pairs (P), or Groups (G).

About the Series

The **Deal With It** series is a set of 32-page books that empower **kids ages 9–12** to resolve conflict in their lives. Information is presented in an interactive and graphic style to engage readers and help spark discussion of issues. The information in this **Resource Guide** is intended to help educators plan lessons around conflict resolution using the **Deal With It** books.



Girlness: Deal with it body and soul

Growing up has its share of challenges. For girls in today's society, it can be especially difficult to balance one's own feelings, hopes, and dreams with parental expectations, peer pressure, and influence from the media. Often, girls are held up to impossible standards of physical appearance, clothing, behaviours, and values. When girls in our society are judged and treated differently solely based on their gender, it is discrimination. ***Girlness: Deal with it body and soul*** helps girls develop strategies to tackle situations in which they might face gender discrimination and sexism.



In this resource guide, teachers will find discussion topics, teaching activities, and strategies to help them approach issues surrounding “girlness” with female and male students. It is important to create a safe classroom environment in which students feel comfortable and secure talking about issues affecting their emotional and social development. Teachers should ensure that students have opportunities to share their feelings through a variety of oral, dramatic, and written activities, and that students demonstrate respect for the topic and for the experiences shared by their peers.

Before You Begin

Here are some tips and suggestions to help you plan your Girlness unit:

- Create a classroom library of books, videos, posters, and magazines from a variety of sources that depict females in a variety of “traditional” and “non-traditional” roles. Consider planning this unit in conjunction with ***Guyness: Deal with it body and soul***.
- Provide opportunities for female students to work in single-sex groups to allow for safe and in-depth sharing of experiences.
- Create a set of classroom norms and/or commitments that establish an environment that allows for open, non-judgmental discussions of ideas and feelings.
- Consider inviting a successful female figure who has broken the mold of traditional femininity to speak to the class.
- Note that ***Girlness: deal with it body and soul*** includes a variety of sensitive issues and situations that are important to address, but may not be appropriate for all grade levels. The language used throughout the book reflects the language more commonly used by middle-school students. It is important that teachers preview the book to select material and content that is appropriate for their students' maturity level.

Girlness 101

Highlights

- People have different ideas about what it means to be feminine. Discrimination is the act of treating people differently based on beliefs about a group of people. Gender discrimination is also called “sexism,” and it can take many forms.
- “Girlness” is another word used to describe “femininity.” There are many traditional views about what makes someone feminine. This can be based on:
 - ☛ appearance
 - ☛ likes and dislikes
 - ☛ abilities
 - ☛ behaviour
- Stereotypes are pre-set ideas about groups of people. It is important to think about your own ideas about femininity in order to make sure you don’t treat people in a certain way because of their gender.

Discussion Questions

- Have you ever been told that you can’t do something or be involved in an activity for no other reason than because you are a girl? Where, when, and who said it? How did you feel?
- Have you ever excluded someone from playing with you based on how “girly” you felt he or she was? How did you feel in this situation? How do you think the other person felt?
- What is your definition of “feminine”? How would your parents define “feminine”? How are your views similar to and different from your parents’? Why do you think your opinions differ?
- Do you think our school treats girls and boys differently? Explain your thinking.
- What images of “girlness” do you see in the media? Do you see role models in the media that contrast the typical view of what is “feminine”? How do they do this?
- Do you think that males or females face more gender discrimination in today’s society? In what ways are females discriminated against? In what ways are males discriminated against?
- Have you ever benefited from a situation in which you were treated differently because you were a girl? What was the situation? Do you think this is fair or unfair? Explain your thinking.

Teaching Activities

I = Individual P = Pair G = Group

Section	Subject Area	Activities
pp. 2–5	Language Arts (G)	As a whole class, have students create a T-chart that lists traditional roles and views of women on one side and non-traditional roles and views of women on the other side. Encourage students to compare and contrast the two lists. Have them explain their thinking and discuss what they think makes a role, job, or characteristic “male” or “female.”
pp. 6–7	Language Arts/ Guidance and Career Education (I/G)	Ask each student to anonymously write a journal entry detailing an experience that he or she has had in which someone was judged based on her “girlness.” Read selected entries to the class and have students discuss the experiences and how they think the people involved would have felt.
pp. 8–9	Language Arts/ Guidance and Career Education (G)	Assign one of the scenarios on the double-page spread to partners or small groups. Have students read the scenario and the answer given. Ask them to discuss whether they agree or disagree with the answers given and how the situation might be interpreted differently. Have them present their ideas to the class and discuss how easy or difficult it is to tell if someone is being discriminated against because of their gender.
pp. 8–9	Media Literacy/ The Arts (visual) (I/G)	Have students brainstorm a list of words and images they associate with “femininity.” Ask them to use this list to create a poster to display their idea of “femininity.” (You may wish to have students use tools such as wordle.net to create their posters.) Have students present their posters to the class, explaining their thinking. Encourage class discussions about where their concepts of femininity come from and how they are influenced by the media.
pp. 10–11	Language Arts/ Guidance and Career Education (I/G)	Have students create a “Dear Girlness Counsellor” advice board. Ask them to post anonymous letters asking for advice about experiences they have had or have heard about. Encourage other students to prepare a counsellor’s response to each posting.
pp. 10–11	Social Studies/ Language Arts (G)	Divide students into two groups and have them debate the statement: “Students learn better in single-sex schools than in co-ed schools.” Give students an opportunity to research and prepare their arguments. Have students conduct their debate. (You may wish to invite other students to moderate and judge the debate.) When the debate is over, encourage students to discuss their ideas and what stereotypes they uncovered in their research.
pp. 12–13	Language Arts/ The Arts (visual) (G)	Ask the class to think about the statement: “Gender discrimination can contribute to low self-esteem, depression, and eating disorders in girls.” Discuss the statement as a class, encouraging students to explain why they think gender discrimination might have this effect on girls. Have students work in small groups to create brochures or a storyboard for a website that will help girls withstand gender discrimination and build their self-esteem. Encourage students to present their brochures and storyboards to the class and display them around the classroom.

The In-Girl

Highlights

- It is important to question all stereotypes about gender and not let them take away from your own sense of self-esteem or influence the way you treat people who do not follow the gender rules.
- Girls can choose to lead by example. They should try not to judge others based on appearance or preconceived stereotypes and treat others the way they want to be treated.
- You can help fight gender discrimination by
 - ☛ refusing to join groups that exclude girls for no good reason
 - ☛ being aware of the words you use and avoiding language that helps promote stereotypes
 - ☛ looking at situations in different ways to see if they are fair or if they discriminate because of gender
 - ☛ staying aware and thinking about what is happening around you so you understand if discrimination is happening
 - ☛ sharing your thoughts and feelings and listening to other people's points of view
- Girls should think critically about what they see in the media and question what messages they are being told. It is important to be aware of the images and portrayals of women in the media and how these images affect how we think about ourselves.

Discussion Questions

- What are some of the stereotypes about males and females that we currently see, promote, and/or accept in our society? How might these stereotypes change as we get older? What do your current ideas about being a boy or girl compare to what you believed when you were younger? What stereotypes about being a man or woman do adults in your life portray? Explain your thinking.
- Have you been hurt by any words, images, and/or actions linked to gender stereotypes? Give an example.
- Do you think males or females face more gender discrimination? Why? How are women discriminated against differently than men?
- What do you think this phrase means: "What's good for the goose is good for the gander"? Do you think this is a fair statement? Why or why not?
- Have you discussed gender roles with adults in your life? Have they influenced the way you see gender roles? How do you feel about their thoughts, values, etc.?
- How do the media help to shape our ideas about "girlness" and "guyness"? How are males and females portrayed in the media? Why do you think men and women are portrayed in these ways?
- What might schools do to help prevent gender discrimination? What does our school do well to combat discrimination? What other strategies would you like to see the school put in place?



Teaching Activities

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Section	Subject Area	Activities
pp. 14–15	Language Arts/ Guidance and Career Education (P/I)	Have students work in pairs or small groups to create a two-column chart. In one column, students will describe themselves as they think others see them, including physical, intellectual, social, and emotional traits and characteristics. In the other column, ask students to describe how they see themselves. Encourage students to reflect on both descriptions and note the similarities and differences. Have students write a journal entry on if they think they show their “true” selves to their peers or if they try to meet other expectations.
pp. 14–15	The Arts (visual) (I/G)	Have students create posters that promote what feminism means to them. Encourage them to research to find out more about the history of feminism to help them generate ideas. You may also wish to display images of women working in what are viewed as “masculine” professions, such as mechanics or construction to help get them started. Have students present their posters to the class and display them in the classroom or around the school.
pp. 16–17	Language Arts/ Guidance and Career Education (I)	Ask students to complete the quiz independently. Then have them complete a self-reflection about what they learned about their own definition of “girlness.” Promote discussion by asking if they were surprised by their findings and what they learned about themselves.
pp. 18–19	Language Arts/ Social Studies (I)	Have students write a persuasive letter to a person in a position of authority, such as their principal, mayor, MPP, or a community leader, outlining an area in which he or she feels “sexism” is present (e.g., the school has a boys’ basketball team, but not a girls’ team). Encourage students to provide reasons why they believe the situation is “sexist” and suggest possible solutions to change the situation. You may wish to have students edit their peers’ work and collect the letters into a class book.
pp. 18–19	Media Literacy (G)	Working in small groups, have students examine teen magazines and decide on what messages these magazines are sending through their portrayal of girls (e.g., “thin is in,” you need fashionable clothes to be attractive, how to attract a guy, smart girls aren’t pretty, etc.). Ask students to create a collage of ads, titles, images, headlines, etc. that demonstrate examples of one message they see in the magazines. Have students present their posters to the class, explaining what message they saw and how they magazine created this message.
pp. 18–19	Media Literacy/ Mathematics (I/G)	Read aloud the first fact from the Did You Know? box on p. 19. Have students watch TV for two hours to conduct a survey of commercials. They should track how many commercials are viewed, whether they have male or female voiceovers, and the products advertised. Have students graph and display their results. As a group, discuss why advertisers might use male and female voiceovers for different types of products and what stereotypes these ads promote.

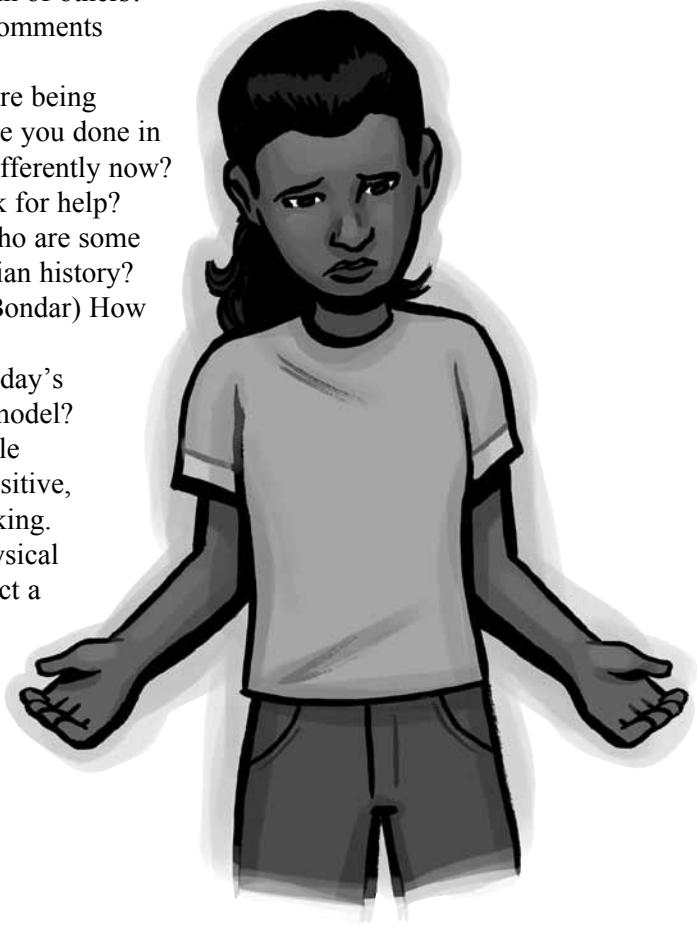
The Out-Girl

Highlights

- Because of the mixed messages she receives about her role as a female, the Out-Girl may feel that she falls short of people's expectations of her. External influences may affect how a girl sees herself and may affect her self-esteem.
- People who tease others and/or engage in discriminatory behaviours based on gender may:
 - feel insecure about their own identity
 - try to make themselves feel better by making fun of others
 - envy the person they're making fun of
 - make fun of other people's gender identity because they are not sure of their own
- Learning to stand up for yourself and telling people how you feel are empowered ways to react to sexism.
- You can help combat sexism by developing the following skills:
 - being assertive and standing up for your rights and the rights of others
 - getting support from trustworthy adults during situations
 - having respect for yourself and others

Discussion Questions

- Why do you think that insecure people might make fun of others? What could you do to help friends who make sexist comments about others?
- When faced with a situation in which you think you are being discriminated against based on your gender, what have you done in the past? How might you handle the same situation differently now? What strategies have you learned? Who could you ask for help?
- What do you know about the history of feminism? Who are some important females to challenge gender roles in Canadian history? (e.g., The Famous Five, Jennie Kidd Trout, Roberta Bondar) How do you think these woman helped fight sexism?
- Who do you see as a current role model for girls in today's society? Why would you consider that person a role model?
- Do you speak with your friends and peers about female experiences? Do your friends support and promote positive, strong females in your peer group? Explain your thinking.
- Do you know anyone who has tried to change her physical appearance (e.g., dieted, exercised, etc.) to try to attract a boy's attention? Do you think that girls should pay attention to advertisements for beauty enhancing products? Do you think that it's possible not to? Are there any beauty campaigns that you think represent women's beauty in a positive way?
- What does the word "empowerment" mean? In what ways have you felt empowered in the past? How can you help yourself develop skills of empowerment?



Teaching Activities

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Section	Subject Area	Activities
pp. 20–21	The Arts (visual)/ Guidance and Career Education (I)	Ask students to create a self-portrait in the medium of their choosing. Then, have them write a brief paragraph or an essay about what they see in their reflection. Ask volunteers to present their portraits to the class and discuss how these images show their strengths and personality.
pp. 20–21	Language Arts (I/G)	Have students create a classified ad seeking the “perfect female role model.” Specify that the ad should include the various characteristics, values, and ideals that the student thinks a female role model should have.
pp. 22–23	The Arts (drama) (G)	Have students work in small groups. Assign each group one of the scenarios from the quiz and ask them to read and then role-play the scenario choosing one of the solutions given. After they have presented their plays, ask students to reflect on the scenario and other ways they could resolve the situation in a positive manner.
pp. 22–23	Language Arts (I/G)	Have students work independently or in partners to choose one of the scenarios that interests them or that they feel a personal connection to. Ask them to write a short newspaper article, including a headline that details the incident and indicates what steps should be taken in order to solve the situation. Encourage volunteers to present their articles to the class.
pp. 24–25	Language Arts/ Social Studies/ Canada and World Studies (I)	Ask students to choose a Canadian woman who challenged gender roles (e.g. Fanny “Bobbie” Rosenthal, Emily Stowe, Julie Payette, Michaele Jean). Have students prepare a short biography about the role the Canadian woman played in the development of “feminism” or the progress of women in a particular industry. Display biographies on a bulletin board in the classroom.
pp. 24–25	Mathematics/ Media Literacy (I/G)	Read the following fact from p. 25: “Young girls and teens who read fashion magazines are twice as likely to diet and three times as likely to exercise to lose weight than those who don’t.” Provide a variety of teen magazines for students to browse through and ask them to identify the target audience for each magazine. Have students survey the magazines to count the number of advertisements, articles, photos, captions, etc. that promote dieting, exercising, and/or tips for changing physical appearance. Have students tally and graph their findings. As a whole class, discuss how the number of articles and images might have a significant influence on the readers of the magazines.

The Witness

Highlights

- The Witness is someone who sees a girl being bullied, teased, or excluded because of ideas about girliness.
- Witnesses can make a big difference in situations of discrimination by:
 - seeking help from a trustworthy adult on behalf of the victim
 - setting a good example for others by treating everyone with respect
 - speaking up against behaviours that discriminate on the basis of gender
 - offering the target support and friendship
 - discouraging the bully's actions by refusing to take the bully's side, telling the bully to stop what he or she is doing, and refusing to hang out with the bully

Discussion Questions

- Have you ever witnessed a peer or friend being discriminated against on the basis of gender? How did it make you feel? How do you think the person being discriminated against felt? What did you do? Would you handle the situation differently now? What strategies might you use to resolve the situation in a positive way?
- Why is it important for the Witness to speak up and “start the change”? What does this tell the bully? How do you think people might react to you if you speak out against sexism?
- Do you feel confident to correct friends' behaviours if they are acting in sexist ways? What strategies could you use? When might you not feel confident in correcting a friend?
- Who are some trustworthy adults that you would speak to about situations you have witnessed or been involved in? Do you discuss experiences with your parents, other family members, or school staff? If not, how might adults in your life be more approachable?
- What would you do if you read a book or textbook that depicted sexist values in it? Who could you speak to about your concerns?
- What do you think our society or community could do to encourage girls to take on “less traditional” roles in society? Do you think it is important for girls to take on non-traditional roles? Explain your thinking.



Teaching Activities

I = Individual P = Pair G = Group

Section	Subject Area	Activities
pp. 26–27	Media Literacy/ The Arts (visual) (I/G)	Ask students to create posters or brochures to share with the whole school that encourage Witnesses to stand up and speak out about gender discrimination and sexism. Encourage students to present their posters or brochures to the class.
pp. 26–27	Social Studies/ Canada and World Studies (I/G)	Have students explore the Canadian Human Rights Commission’s information about women’s rights on their “Human Rights in Canada: A Historical Perspective” website (www.chrc-ccdp.ca/en/browse/Subjects/womenRights.asp). Have students use this information or research further to create a timeline illustrating some of the key events for women’s rights in Canadian history.
pp. 28–31	Language Arts (G)	Ask students to work through the quiz independently, then reflect on their answers. As a whole class, discuss the questions and ask students to share their answers, feelings, and thoughts. Encourage them to suggest other possible ways of resolving each situation in a positive way.
pp. 28–31	Language Arts (I/G)	Have students research to find a picture book that depicts a female character challenging traditional roles and/or taking on a non-traditional role in the story. Ask students to read the story and then perform an oral retelling of the story to the class, including a reflection on whether or not they think the book would be a positive influence on young readers.
pp. 28–31	Media Literacy (I)	<p>Have students choose one or two television shows to watch during an evening at home. Ask them to act as a Witness to the storyline and record how the female and male characters are portrayed in the television show. Encourage them to ask themselves these questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do the characters portray traditional roles? • Do any of the characters portray non-traditional roles? • Did you notice any incidences of gender discrimination? • Was there something a bystander on the show did do or could have done to improve the situation? <p>Have students present their findings to the class and discuss how these shows might influence both boys’ and girls’ concepts of “girlness” in positive or negative ways.</p>

Additional Resources

- www.campaignforrealbeauty.ca: Although this is a commercial website, Dove's Campaign for Real Beauty explores important issues around self-esteem and media literacy through videos and quizzes.
- www.cca-kids.ca: The Concerned Children's Advertisers website includes PSAs that explore issues around girliness and self-esteem, including "We Are Girls," "Boutique," and "Words Hurt."
- http://kidshealth.org/kid/feeling/emotion/self_esteem.html: KidsHealth offers information on a variety of health topics for adolescents.
- www.wordle.net: This tool can help students create posters.
- Douglas, Ann. *Body Talk: The Straight Facts on Fitness, Nutrition, and Feeling Good About Yourself*. Toronto, ON: Maple Tree Press, 2006.
- Kyi, Tanya Lloyd. *Canadian Girls Who Rocked the World*. Vancouver, BC: Whitecap Books, 2001.
- Thimmesh, Catherine. *Girls Think of Everything: Stories of Ingenious Inventions by Women*. Boston, MA: Houghton Mifflin, 2000.
- Voigt, Cynthia. *It's Not Easy Being Bad*. New York, NY: Simon and Schuster, 2000.
- Wyatt, Valerie, and Pat Cupples. *The Science Book for Girls and Other Intelligent Beings*. Toronto, ON: Kids Can Press, 2008.

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